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WILD OATS.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Saw you the field by morning bright,
With fallow earth laid warm and light,
For human souls to sow aright
With precious seed.

Saw you the gay young sowers there,
Their careless hands so firm and fair,
Flinging the wild oats everywhere,
Like harmless seed.

Heard you their loud exultant shout,
As gold-like rain fell round about,
Whilst garlands flung their sweetness out,
Above the seed.

Soft rippling notes from woman's tongue,
Made music as she idly sung,
And pearls from spiders' tents unstrung,
Amid the seed.

Saw you fair brows wreathed with the vine,
Above soft eyes whose gladsome shine
Gathered their gladness over wine,
As fell the seed.

The while, the sowers' footsteps gay
Trod down pale blossoms in their way,
And clinging vines went wild astray,
Through springing seed.

Only wild oats—a merry crop
'Twould grow, perchance—perchance 'twould stop,
Without a harvest at its top.
'Tis fearful seed.

* * * * * *

See you the reapers' nearing night,
With troubled faces worn and white,
Dim with remorse and wan with fright;
Yet must they reap.

See you the sickle rise and fall,
Through stalwart grain grown swart and tall,
'Mid poison creepers loop and thrall;
Yet must they reap.

The sun is down, the night is nigh,
Gray, solemn clouds o'ercast the sky,
Presaging whirlwind by and by;
Yet must they reap.

Poor faded garlands lie about,
Accusing voices wail and shout,
And faces wronged from graves look out;
Yet must they reap.

From many a furrow gaping there
Rises some disregarded prayer,
(Oh, saddest fruit this earth can bear!)
Yet must they reap.

Too late! The reaper falls aghast,
Wild oats have ripened full and fast,
To crush him 'neath their weight at last.
The crop is reaped.

AGNES PERCY;

OR,

THE RIVAL HEIRS OF ABBOTSWOLD.

A STORY OF SHADOW AND SUNSHINE.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER I.

THE HEIR OF ABBOTSWOLD.

An odd old structure was Abbotswold Castle, and yet grand and imposing in its way. During the reign of the first Plantagenet—Henry II.—a certain Archibald Percy received from the king, for valuable services against the French in Normandy, a large tract of land on the northern coast of Norfolk. The conqueror had bestowed this same land, then a vast forest, upon a knighted Abbot, and thereon upon an eligible eminence near the sea, the holy knight had erected an abbey; and so the estate came to be called Abbot's Wood. During the reign of Stephen the abbey was demolished, and when Sir Archibald came into possession, he erected a stout castle upon the site of the abbey, and liking the original name he retained it, simply giving the old Saxon termination, thus rendering it ABBOTSWOLD. During the wars of the Red and White Roses, this castle, being in an exposed position, suffered much. The outer walls were battered down; the moat filled up; and the keep itself sadly shaken; and for a long time it remained in this half-ruined state. During the reign of Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Percy, created a marquis, having gained by marriage a large fortune from another quarter, turned his attention to the rebuilding of the house of his ancestors. Two of the old towers were found to be perfect, and with a comparatively trifling expense the keep was restored. And then Sir Thomas went on and erected a spacious mansion in addition to the restored portion of the original structure; also laying out a large park, and otherwise improving the place. By the letters patent granted to Thomas, the marquisate was made an hereditary honor, and descended to the heirs of his body. His descendants, keeping pace with their times, made such alterations and additions as their tastes suggested, until at the time of which we write, there had grown up a structure combining with the stern masonry of the Plantagenets the more fanciful architecture of Elizabeth's reign, together with the comforts and conveniences of more modern times. It was a castle when first built; Sir Thomas called it a castle after he had resuscitated it; and now, as we introduce it to the reader—George II., D. G., 1730—it still bears the old name—ABBOTSWOLD CASTLE.

On a pleasant afternoon in early autumn, when the corn was ripening and the husbandman was preparing his garner for the reception of the store that was to keep himself and his loved ones through the year to come, a small party of ladies and gentlemen stood upon one of the terraces in front of the castle; and while some conversed in gay and laughing tones, others gazed off upon the varied scene spread out to their view. To the right, which was to the Eastward, the land sloped gently down to a thick hedge, beyond which arose a rough, rocky eminence, extending to the broad embouchure of a river. Little of the river, however, could be seen from that point, the bold promontory, or headland of rock, effectually covering it; but at the distance of three miles, or thereabouts, a narrow ribbon of silvery water sparkled in the sunlight, and beyond this, upon another rocky headland, was to be seen an old fort, the large black guns still lying upon the ramparts, and a solitary sentinel pacing up and down upon the parapet. To the left the land sloped more gradually than on the other hand, and the scene was of green meadows and a dark curtain of wood beyond. In front an open park sloped down towards the sea, the beautiful green of the turf broken here and there by winding paths, low hedges of rose-bushes, and flowering shrubs, and sturdy trees, sloped away full half a mile, to a stout wall and high hedge of buckthorn, to a point in the centre of which all the paths in the park converged, there emptying into the main avenue, and there finding the great gate, with narrower gates or wickets, upon either side. And here stood a well-built lodge, with its own little garden and out-houses, where the porters of Abbotswold had lived for many and many a year. Beyond this main wall was the king's highway, cutting through the estate; for beyond this, still, were numerous cottages belonging to the marquis, in which lived his yachtmen and his fishermen. And still further on throbbed the bosom of the sea, its waves, when the wind lashed them to fury, often breaking over those cots that stood nearest to the shore. And this was not all. Still further on to the right hand, and to the left, were islands, large and small; and two light-houses reared their gleaming caps against the dark blue back-ground—one of them upon an island far out to sea, and the other upon the rocky promontory just beyond the fort.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1868, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

AN OVERWHELMING ANNOUNCEMENT.

Ascend to the top of the highest tower of the castle, and gaze off in the opposite direction from the sea, and there lay the main park, stretching away in a dense forest to the Southward and Westward for many miles; while on the other hand, some two or three miles distant, with its neat white cottages gleaming in the light of the declining sun, lay the village of Abbotswold—every house, and every rod of land, save one spot which had been given in fee to the rector, belonging to the lord of the castle.

Well might people envy the noble owner of all this property; and yet he had his trials, and was as liable to suffer as were those who gazed so enviously upon him.

And now let us return to the party whom we left standing upon the terrace. That middle-aged man, of bold front, and goodly presence, dressed in black velvet, with buckles of gold upon his shoes, and a sparkling diamond of wondrous size and beauty in his frilled shirt front, is John Percy, the present Marquis of Abbotswold. He is hale and hearty, somewhat stern of aspect, but yet of a kind heart, prizing his honor above every earthly thing of material good, and ready always to lend his aid towards any really good work.

The youth by the lord's side, with a book in his hand, is Eustace Percy, a son of the marquis, but not his heir. No,—Eustace is only eighteen, and his brother Albert is twenty. Albert, bold, dashing, and handsome, just home from Oxford for a hunting vacation, is to succeed to the lordship of this great estate, and Eustace is hesitating between the Church and the Army. The marquis says nothing to influence the boy either way; the marchioness pleads for the church, while the boy himself prefers the army. And, wonderful and paradoxical as it may seem, a certain beautiful maiden, who even now steals sly and palpitating glances at the pale student, whispers to him that he shall be a soldier. She knows there will be danger; but she thinks she could love a hero; and she knows Eustace Percy would be a hero if he were a soldier; for she knows that he is noble and true, and that a braver youth never lived.

Eustace Percy stood by his father's side, having just been called out from an arbor where he had been engaged in study. He was tall and well-formed; and though there were slight lacks of development in his person, yet he gave token of great muscular power to come with maturer age. His face was strikingly handsome. His brow broad and high; his eyes large and brilliant, and of a clear, cerulean blue; the outline of his profile of the finest Grecian cast; while his hair, of a golden brown, cropped short over the white, full brow, was suffered to float away over his shoulders and back in a mass of natural curls.

At a short distance from the marquis stood the marchioness, engaged in conversation with a bevy of girls who were her guests for the time. She was a handsome woman, and a fit companion for the lord of Abbotswold.

There were others upon the terrace; but as they have nothing to do with our story we will leave them to gaze upon the scene before them.

One of those girls conversing with the marchioness we must notice, however, as she is to go with us to the end. I mean that blue-eyed, laughing, happy-faced maiden, with the brown tresses floating unconfined over her shoulders, the dimples in whose cheeks and chin give such charm to her smiles. She is Isabel St. John, the daughter of a well-to-do baronet who owns an estate down towards Norwich; and it does not require a very great amount of penetration to discover that she is in love with Eustace. She it is who would have him enter the army instead of the church; and she now feels that she could cheerfully bear him company even to the very battle-field.

"Eustace," said the marquis, regarding his son with a look of tender regard—a look such as he never gave to the older son.—Of that older son he was proud—proud of his gallant bearing, and of his bold and dashing habit, and of his regal beauty of fully developed manhood,—but the tender love of the father's heart was given in greater measure to this younger boy. Albert had caused his father much uneasiness—many an hour of unrest by his reckless and headstrong course; but never a moment of uneasiness on Eustace's account.—"Eustace, I wish you would throw away that book and take out your horse. Why did you not join your brother in the chase to-day?"

"In truth, my father," replied the youth, looking up with an expression of filial love that went straight to the parent's heart, "I care little for such sports. In the time to come I may not be able to indulge in them, so I would not become attached to them now."

"Nonsense, my boy!" cried the marquis. "What do you mean by not being able to indulge in the future? Do you imagine that you are to be left to earn your own bread with your sword? Zounds! you'll not find it quite so bad as that. Your brother will be lord of Abbotswold; and of course the entailed estates must all be his; but I would have you to know that if I had a dozen children I could leave them all well provided for. So, I beg you, my son, for my sake take a little more exercise in the fresh air. You need it. Your cheeks are growing thin, and those arms of yours need strengthening."

"Well, well," said Eustace, bending his eyes upon the ground, and speaking slowly and thoughtfully, "I will try and please you." Presently he looked up and added,—"I will go and walk now. I feel——"

"How do you feel, Eustace?" the father asked, as his son came to a full stop. "If you feel as you look, you must feel rather sad. What is the matter? Are you ill?"

"No, no, father," the youth quickly answered, seeing that his parent was alarmed, "I am entirely well; and yet I am sad."

"Pooh! pooh! Dreaming again, my boy! You are always dreaming. I must shut your books away from you for awhile. The doctor told me your temperament was a peculiarly sensitive one; and I believe he was right."

"Yes," murmured the lad, half to himself, "and I am as sensitive to things yet to come as I am to things already in the present. My father, there is a heavy load upon my heart this day."

"There, boy—no more of that! In mercy's name, do not prognosticate evil!"—The marquis spoke quickly and eagerly—"I never knew you to fall into one of these fits but something ill came to pass directly thereafter. The last time you were so sad under a heart-load, our little Bertha was taken from us—the third and last of my daughters—leaving you and Albert alone for us to love. O, no more of it, Eustace! Cheer up, and look off to where the sun shines. See how it makes the thatch upon Callington's cot look like burnished gold!"

The marquis gazed off upon the fisherman's cot as he spoke, and directly a heavy shadow rested upon his own face.

"By the way," he said, speaking in a low tone, and looking to see that only his son could hear his words, "have you noticed whether Albert visits Callington's cottage of late as he used to do?"

Eustace shook his head without answering.

"I know what you mean," said Sir John, sadly. "Albert goes there too often, and I tremble for the consequences. Agatha Callington is very beautiful, and I wonder not that the boy is smitten; but he should remember his station, and not bring a stain upon his name directly under the shadow of his own home. I will speak with him. I should have done so before. I have neglected my duty."

Aye, John Percy, you HAVE neglected your duty; and that neglect hath given birth to a curse that shall fall so heavily upon your house in the coming time that one whom you now love and cherish shall, under its fiery touch, wish that he had never been born!

"Indeed, my father," returned Eustace, hopefully, "I do not think Albert would do anything wrong. Is he not a Percy?"

"Ah, my boy, there have been some very bad qualities in the characters of men bearing that name. But I will not borrow——"

"Ha!" cried Isabel St. John, jumping up and clapping her hands at that moment, and thus interrupting the marquis in his speech, "here come the hunters. Come, Mr. Percy," she continued, approaching Eustace, "you must smile now, for you know we are to have a grand time this evening—Eustace! What is it? You are ill?"

"No, no, dear lady. It is only a passing thought. I will banish it speedily."

"What means that?"

"What?"

"The horses are walking, and there come men out from the wood bearing something like a litter."

Aye—what is it?

And still the horses walk—walk so slowly that men who bear something like a litter can keep up with them. Slowly, slowly,—but nearer and nearer still, until those who bear the litter—for a litter it is—come up to the terrace and set their burden down.

Lord Abbotswold sees what is on that litter, and with a mighty groan he buries his face in his hands, and sinks down upon his knees by its side.

The marchioness sees what is upon that litter, and with a low, wailing cry, she sinks fainting upon it.

Eustace Percy gazes upon the thing which those men have borne from the wood, and with his hands clasped and his eyes turned heavenward, he prays for the eternal rest of his dead brother!

Aye—Eustace Percy is no more for the church—no more for the army. He is the heir of Abbotswold, being the only living child of John Percy.

The sad story was told in a very few words. Albert Percy had lost his life as hundreds had lost their lives before. Excited in the chase,—determined to lead the party,—bent upon being the first to strike the game, he urged his horse over a barrier too high for the leap; and when his companions came up, they found horse and rider both dead!

"Where is Gertrude?"

Gertrude Harworth was the marchioness's maid, and she was wanted to care for her mistress.

"Where is the girl?" demanded the marquis, who had recovered sufficiently to look to the welfare of his fainting wife. "Send Gertrude Harworth here instantly!"

But Gertrude Harworth was not to be found; and by-and-by the old porter came, and informed his master that the girl had gone away to her home.

By this time the marchioness had recovered so far as to be able to understand what was going on around her, and she excused her maid by saying:

"Poor Gertrude! She has been ailing for some time. I told her yesterday that she might go home. Send for Mary. What is it? Where——"

She had forgotten what had caused her faintness; but, as she spoke, her eyes rested again upon the burden which the stout men had borne up from the wood, and again her senses forsook her.

* * * * * *

Two weeks had passed since the event which had made Eustace Percy heir of Abbotswold. The funeral had taken place, and the bereaved ones had sought strength and support at the fount of Heavenly Mercy until they were inclined to calm and tranquil resignation.

Among the servants, and among the numerous tenants, there had at first been a deep feeling of sorrow for the dead, and sympathy for the living; but these lowly and dependent people found a nearer and more palpable source of consolation than the lord and his family had found. The exchange, they felt sure, would prove a blessing to them; and since it had been ordered in the Book of Fate that Albert Percy was to die young, they were glad he had died ere he became their lord; and they were furthermore glad that Master Eustace, so quiet and so kind, was to succeed his father.

It was early evening, and the servant who brought candles to the library for the marquis informed him that one of his tenants was in the hall, and wished very much to see him.

"Who is the man?"

"It is Owen Callington, the fisherman, my lord."

"Show him up." A dark shadow settled upon Sir John's face, and his fingers worked nervously, one with another.

By and by the man came—a stout, good-looking fellow, of middle-age; his face made dark by exposure to wind and weather in his calling upon the water; but not dark enough to hide the native goodness of heart that gave character to his manhood.

The fisherman begged his lordship's pardon, for he had come to talk upon a very unpleasant subject; but necessity compelled him, and he was forced to go on.

The marquis folded his hands, and bade his visitor proceed.

Owen Callington told his story—told the story of his poor, misguided daughter—and in the end threw himself upon the mercy of his lord.

"God knows," he said, wiping a tear from his eye, "*that I bear no ill-will to you nor to any of your kin; and as for him that's dead an' gone*, I can only be sorry *that it wasn't* my own sweet Agatha that had fallen asleep forever instead of him. I don't curse him, your lordship; though when I see my poor child layin' there, with the curse upon her that she can never shake off, I think I ought to curse him. And then he did one thing that was meaner than all the rest. He cheered poor Agatha up by pretending that he would marry her. When she knew that her child would soon be born she threatened to come to you, your lordship; and thereupon Master Albert tells her that he'll marry her; and he goes and hires a good-for-nothing rascal to act the priest, and they had the marriage ceremony performed."

"Where?" asked the marquis.

"In the church. Albert got the keys easy enough, and carried them back when he had done with them. And my poor girl didn't know of the trick that had been put upon her until it was too late to help herself."

The marquis asked further questions, and the fisherman answered readily and frankly.

At length Sir John arose and paced up and down the library a while, and when he resumed his seat he was calm and collected.

"Mr. Callington," he said, "I have no doubt that Albert was the father of your daughter's child. A boy, you said?"

"Yes, your lordship. And if you could but see it, you——"

"Never mind," interposed the marquis, with an admonitory wave of the hand. "I believe you have told me the truth, and now I will make you my proposition: On your part, for yourself and for your daughter, you promise that this thing shall be kept as quiet as possible. My wife does not suspect such a thing, and my son, Eustace, knows nothing of it; and it is my desire that they should remain ignorant. On my part I will bind myself to pay to your daughter, while this child lives and she lives, the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds a year, payable at my bankers, in quarterly installments; and should the child outlive his mother, I will see that said amount is paid to him during his lifetime. My death will make no difference. You will call the child——"

"We have named him Albert, your lordship." The man saw a frown upon the face of the marquis, and he explained: "Poor girl! she loved the lad, Sir John—she loved him truly and well—and she couldn't forego that bit of comfort. She named him herself."

"But the other name, Owen?"

"It shall be our own name, your lordship. He shall be called Albert Callington."

"So be it then," pursued the marquis. "And now mark you: I will put it down in my will that this sum shall be paid to Albert Callington while he lives. Will that be satisfactory?"

It was far, very far, more than the poor man had even dared to hope; and he went away feeling that his daughter would be rich; and before he went he gave a solemn pledge that, so far as his influence could go, a knowledge of what had that evening transpired should never be gained by any one outside his own family; and he would, if possible, hold the child forever in ignorance of his true parentage.

And when Owen Callington reached his humble cot, he told to his wife and to his child what the marquis had asked him to promise; and they both agreed with him that they would keep their secret within their own bosoms; and Agatha said that she certainly hoped her child might never know who its father was.

Poor Agatha! She had been tempted once.

She little thought how soon she might be tempted again!

Late on that Autumn night John Percy kneeled at his bedside, and earnestly prayed to God that the crime of his dead son might not be visited upon the heads of the living.

CHAPTER II.

AN ADVENTURE ON THE HIGHWAY.

* * * * * *

Since the day on which the lifeless form of Albert Percy was borne up from the wood to the terrace in front of the castle, two and twenty years have passed. Almost an age. Boys and girls have grown to be men and women; youths and maidens have become middle-aged; and those who were in the prime of active life have passed away across the dark river to that unseen land whence no visitor hath yet returned to tell us what it is like.

Great changes have taken place at Abbotswold Castle. John Percy and his wife have been dead these ten years; Eustace Percy is the marquis now, and Isabel St. John, that was, has been his wife almost twenty years. Of the servants, some are new, and some are old. The porter at the gate still holds out; and though a younger man is kept there to do the work, yet Paul Atheling, creeping on towards ninety, fancies that he was never smarter than he is now. My lady's maid is the same that served the former marchioness, and a more faithful servant cannot be found. Gertrude Harworth is her name, and, if I remember rightly, she was saved the pain of seeing the ghostly form that the stout men bore upon their shoulders up from the wood, having been at that time sick and at her own home. Then she had a father and a mother; but they have both died since, and now she has no home but Abbotswold Castle. And the marquis and the marchioness are both very kind to her, for the sad events of the past seem to have affected her very deeply; and since the tragic death of Albert Percy she has never smiled as she used to smile in the other years. Some of the servants—those who pride themselves upon their penetration—have whispered that the humble waiting-maid loved the handsome heir of Abbotswold; and sure it is that she had a lock of hair in a little golden case—a lock of hair which she had been seen to kiss more than once—a lock of hair wondrously like the locks that graced the head of Albert Percy. But what of that? Even among the lowly fishermen upon the coast, there were many heads with locks as fine and as glossy as were his.

One child has been born to Eustace Percy, and only one. Isabel came very near dying when she became a mother, and the doctors told her husband that she could never rear a large family. But that one child has been enough to command all the love of the happy parents. A girl, and they call her AGNES; and the tenants of Abbotswold, and the fishermen who sometimes come up to the castle, and the people from far and near, who come there as visitors, do not speak falsely when they declare that Agnes Percy is the most beautiful girl they ever saw. As light and as lithe of form as a fairy: as gay and as joyous as a spirit from the realms of ethereal happiness; as fair and as beautiful as the sweetest vision that ever visited the luxurious son of Islam in his dreams of heaven; and yet as true and as good as the most devout and hopeful teacher of Christianity would have us poor mortals become here on earth. No wonder that everybody loved Agnes Percy; and no wonder that her parents regarded her with feelings akin to worship. The love which Eustace Percy felt for that child was almost painful, and during the eighteen years of her life his regard for her had been one constant prayer. Sometimes, when the thought of losing her came to his mind, he would become so weak as to be almost sick; but she was growing up strong and well, and he looked now to see that no cloud settled upon her young life.

Since Sir John's death—a time now ten years agone—Owen Callington had been regularly, on the first days of January, April, July, and October, of each year, and drawn out, in the name of Albert Callington, the sum of sixty-two pounds and ten shillings, from the hands of the banker whom the old marquis had selected as his administrator. He had done this until within a year; but about a year ago, as Eustace learned from the banker, (the banker told it of his own accord, for it was a subject which Eustace never broached,) that Owen had brought the young man Albert with him, and introduced him; and since then the money had been paid to Albert Callington's own order.

Sir Eustace had no doubt in his own mind concerning the meaning of this. He had never asked any questions, and he had never heard a word from any one on the subject, but still he believed that this young Callington was his own brother's illegitimate child; and so believing, he not only saw the money paid with a cheerful heart, but he resolved, if the opportunity ever presented itself, to do something more for the youth.

Towards the last of October, in the year 1752, the Marquis of Abbotswold had business with his banker in Norwich, and he went down to attend to it. As he was preparing to set forth his wife suggested that he had better take some of the servants with him.

"You know," she said, looking up into his face with tender solicitude, "that there are desperate characters abroad, and that many deeds of violence have been done in the very section of country which you are to traverse. And then you will remember that you propose to bring home a large sum of money with you."

But the marquis only laughed at his wife's fears.

"I shall wear my sword," he said; "and I shall have a brace of very good pistols at my saddle-bow. I do not think any one will think it worth their while to molest me."

And certainly, as he there stood, with his forty years of manhood developed into a presence of marvellous physical power, it did not seem that any single man would have sought an encounter at fair advantage; but Lady Percy was well aware that the men whom she feared were not in the habit of prowling about singly. However, the marquis sought to kiss away her fears, and bidding her look for him on the following day, he set forth.

The Marquis of Abbotswold reached Norwich too late to do business with his banker that day; so he sought out a few of his friends, with whom he passed a very pleasant evening. On the next day he did his business, and at noon he was ready to set forth on his return, with twenty thousand pounds in his pocket,—money which he intended to send to London by his confidential agent, who was going thence by water.

His lordship had not observed that men had followed close upon his heels on his way from Abbotswold; nor had he observed that these same men had watched him closely while in Norwich; and when he stood in the banker's office, and put his well-filled pocket-book away into his bosom, he paid no attention to the man who came in to get silver for a five-pound note; and, had he seen that this man went out and joined other men, and that they all rode away to the northward together, he would probably have paid no heed; for his thoughts had never once dwelt upon the proposition that any man could plot against his peace. From the day on which he came into possession of the broad acres of his house he had made it his chief study to work for the good of those dependent upon him; and he had reason to believe that everybody loved him. The darkest cloud that had yet settled down upon him came with the death of his kindred, and that there could come clouds from another source he had not considered. The nearest he had come to it, had been when a nameless, shapeless dread would seize him in connection with thoughts of his fair child.

The marquis had only about thirty miles to ride, and as the afternoon was pleasant, he suffered his horse to jog along at pleasure; but in the course of an hour, or so, a change came over the character of the weather. Clouds arose to the eastward, and the light breeze had changed to a spitting, whiffling gale, with a chill moisture in its breath. Seeing and feeling this the marquis drew his rein and put his horse to a brisker pace; and in this way he sped on until he reached Walsingham, where he stopped at the Red Lion to let his horse breathe awhile. The distance from this place to Abbotswold was not more than twelve miles, and pretty soon he set forth again. He had ridden five miles, or so, and was thinking that he must hurry on if he would reach home before dark, when he observed that directly ahead was a cross-road, and that two men, on foot, were coming out into the highway. He might not have paid any attention to this had he not noticed, a moment afterwards, that two more men were coming out from the byway on the opposite side. At first he took these men to be negroes, and he was wondering where they could have come from, when it struck him that the sable complexion was only the result of black crape worn over the face.

Surely, that looked like mischief. For a moment Percy drew in his rein, thinking whether it were best to turn back, or to keep on, and face the danger; but before he had decided the question a fifth man darted out from the hedge, and caught his bridle with a grip so strong that the horse was almost set back upon his haunches.

"How now, villain!" cried the marquis, clapping his hand upon the hilt of his sword, and starting it from its sheath.

"Ah! have a care, your lordship!" returned the ruffian, at the same time presenting a pistol. "Don't do that. If you go to makin' a fight of it, we shall have to fight as well as you; and you ought to know how such a bit of play would be likely to end. Give us your money, and we won't harm so much as a hair of your head. We know you've got twenty thousand pounds in your pocket-book—stowed right away in your bosom, there, and we want it."

By this time the other four had come up, two of them standing directly at his horse's head, while the others came up by his side. They all had pistols in their belts; but the weapons which they held ready for immediate use were heavy clubs.

Now the lord of Abbotswold could have given away twenty thousand pounds without missing it; for his rent-roll would yield him that in a month; and, moreover, he would have cheerfully paid that amount for any good to his fellows which would have been commensurate with the gift. But that was not the thing. Eustace Percy liked not to do a thing upon compulsion. This twenty thousand pounds must start for London the very next day. He had been having the old family jewels reset, and a few additions made in the way of pearls and diamonds, that his wife and daughter might have jewels up with the times; and he was determined that the money should not be taken from him if he could prevent it. Right is strong, and he resolved to pit it against Might thus brought up to oppose him.

Had the marquis drawn his pistols, he might possibly have shot down the two men before him: but he had not yet been stricken, and there was something in the deliberate shooting of a fellow creature that was not at all to his liking. A moment later, however, he was sorry for this instinct of humanity, for no sooner had he drawn his sword than he received a blow upon his right arm that caused his weapon to drop, and immediately afterwards he was dragged from his saddle to the ground. He quickly regained his feet, and faced the ruffians, who had now gathered together before him.

"Look ye, yer lordship," spoke a tall, powerful fellow, who held his club in a menacing manner, "does thee mean to make us fight for it?—because, if thee does, egad! thee'll have enough of it; an' that right quickly, too."

This was a time for his lordship to consider; and what conclusion he might have arrived at we cannot say; for hardly had the burly ruffian ceased speaking when a new-comer appeared upon the scene. The noise and excitement of the strife had prevented the party from hearing the tramp of the horse until both horse and rider were upon the spot, having come from the southward.

"Hallo! What is this?"

So demanded the stranger; and, as he spoke, he slipped from his saddle, and approached the marquis's side. He saw at a glance that a gentleman was opposed by five stout and disguised ruffians, and with quick discernment he readily comprehended the whole matter.

"How now, villains, why have you waylaid this gentleman in such a manner?"

"If you like to put your head in the same trap with his lordship's, you're welcome, I'm sure," replied the man who had last addressed the marquis.

"*His lordship!*" repeated the stranger.

"Eustace Percy, at your service, sir," said the marquis.

And, having thus spoken, he darted to where his sword had fallen, and picked it up. The movement was so quick that the rascals could not prevent it; and as the marquis quietly moved back to the stranger's side, after he had regained his sword, they did not offer then to touch him. They saw that the new-comer was without arms of any kind—unless he might have had a small pistol hidden away—and they evidently concluded not to fear him.

"Is this Lord Percy, Marquis of Abbotswold?" the stranger demanded, with lively emotion.

"The same, gentle sir."

"Then, egad, let's set these fellows aside, for I would fain accompany you to Abbotswold."

The stranger spoke in a light, confident manner; but in an instant afterwards there was a contraction of the muscles about the lips, and a corrugation of the brow, that changed the expression of his face wonderfully; and the ruffians seemed at once to comprehend that they had found one who might prove a troublesome customer if he were not quickly disposed of, for they raised their clubs in a belligerent manner, and their spokesman said to him, not in very gentle tones:

"Look 'e, my fine gentleman, just you mix up in this, and you'll find 'at you've come just in time to get your head broke. Take that, and try it!"

Now when the rascal told the gentleman to take that and try it, he meant to have accompanied the invitation with a blow upon the head from his club; but, somehow, the gentleman was too quick for him, for the latter not only dodged the blow, but he made a movement like lightning—a compound movement, which consisted in grasping the ruffian's club with his left hand, at the same time dealing him a blow with his right, directly under the ear, which settled him as though he had been stricken by an ax.

For a few seconds, the marquis was held so spell-bound by the stranger's movements that he could only suffer his sword to drop in his grasp while he looked on in wonder; and as he looked, he could only think of the story he had so often read in Holy Writ, of Samson laying about among the Philistines with the jaw-bone. Two of the ruffians had the stranger sent to earth, when he who had been first stricken down with the fist, crawled up and approached the Titan from behind. When Percy saw this he sprang to the work, and in a very few moments four of the robbers had bitten the dust, and the fifth was fleeing away as fast as his legs would carry him.

CHAPTER III.

ISABEL'S COUSIN.

As soon as it was evident that the fifth ruffian had escaped them, both the men, moved by the same instinct, stooped to ascertain the result of their work.

"I am sorry," said the marquis—and his tones vouched for his sincerity. "I believe I have sent this poor fellow to his final account."

"And here is one whom I have sent to bear him company," added the stranger. "Mercy! no man can live with such a smash of the skull as that. But these other two are alive. Will your lordship stop to render them assistance?"

"There is no need," replied Percy. "Let's have a look at their faces, and then we'll move on. There is a small hamlet not far distant, where I am well known, and I will send people from that place to look after these fellows, and nurse them if there be need."

The marquis stripped the crape from the faces of the fallen men, and one of them he recognized as a face that he had seen among fishermen at Abbotswold, but he was sure 'twas no tenant of his. The other three were strangers.

And now Sir Eustace had opportunity to turn and take a fair look at his deliverer; and the result of the look was pleasing. He beheld a young man, not over five-and-twenty, clad in a half-military suit, with a form of matchless symmetry and grace, yet compact and muscular—the thin flanks, the elegant outline of the swelling thighs and calves, and the massive chest and shoulders giving token of that wondrous power which had been just displayed. His face was something more than handsome. The features were not only cast in a mould of perfect manly beauty, but there was a light of truth and honor, and a beaming from the clear blue eyes of generous sentiment and sincere affection which was not to be mistaken by one who possessed even an ordinary capacity for reading human character from outward signs. His face was clean-shaved, and the dark hue of the skin told very plainly that he had been much exposed to storm and sunshine.

The marquis concluded the survey, and then reached forth his hand with a generous smile.

"You enjoy an advantage over me, good sir. I cannot call the name of the man who has saved me from the hands of a pack of desperados who might have taken my life if I had not received assistance."

"We ought to be good friends, my lord," returned the stranger, as he took Percy's hand and shook it warmly. "I think a certain fair cousin of mine has a home beneath your roof."

"How!" cried Percy, in glad tones. "Is this Rupert St. John?"

"I am Captain Sir Rupert St. John, at your service, my lord."

"Aye," continued the marquis, in the same glad strain, "Isabel told me that you were a captain; but I did not know that you had been knighted."

"Yes," said St. John, with a smile. "In consideration of the amount of blood I lost in India, and in further consideration of my misfortune in being the son of a younger branch of our family, his most gracious majesty has been pleased to tap me upon the shoulder with the point of his own sword, and to declare me a knight of the realm."

"Upon my soul, I am glad," exclaimed the marquis, grasping the young man's hand once more. "Such a royal cross as that, won upon the field amid danger and death—won where the foemen [illegible] thickest, and where stout arms and loyal hearts are needed for the support of our meteor flag—the golden cross thus won is worth a thousand that come idly dropping down from the prolific branches of parent trees—aye, more honorable than a peerage that only falls upon a man from the shoulders of a dead ancestor."

The marquis spoke warmly and ardently, and the glow that came upon the young knight's cheek, and the rich moisture that gathered in his eye, told how grateful he was, and how deeply he appreciated the generous sentiments of his new-found relative and friend.

Rupert St. John was the son of a younger brother of Isabel Percy's father. Isabel's father had inherited the family estates and the baronetcy, while the younger brother, having gained a lieutenancy in a cavalry regiment, had gone out to India, where he had married the daughter of a wealthy merchant, and where the remainder of his days were spent. Once, however, when his son was a mere babe, he visited England, and left his wife and little one to remain with his brother nearly three years. This child was Rupert, and during those two or three years Isabel, then a maiden of seventeen, had been his constant attendant. And since Rupert had grown to man's estate, he had corresponded with Isabel frequently. His first letter had been to inform her of the death of his father, and her answer to that was so kind and so loving, that he was emboldened to write again. And now Rupert St. John had revisited England for the first time since he was five years old.

It having been decided that they would not stop to bother with the ruffians, the marquis and his companion sought their saddles, and at the distance of little more than two miles they reached the hamlet of which mention has been made, when Percy told his story to the innkeeper, who promised to take sufficient help, and go out and bring in the living and dead. The dead he would see decently buried; and the living, if he caught them, he would keep till further orders.

And I may as well tell here, as anywhere, that those two living rascals were never found again in that region. Whether they had their senses when the marquis left them, and only feigned insensibility for their own ends, I cannot say.

"I suppose," remarked the marquis, as they rode on towards home, "that you have no very clear recollection of your cousin Isabel."

The captain shook his head and smiled. "I remember her very well, Sir Eustace. You must bear in mind that I was five years old when I left her and returned to India. I do not think there is any picture of the past, near or remote, more clearly fixed upon my memory than is the picture of that sweet face. She was pretty—and she was good."

"And I can assure you, my dear boy," cried the marquis, with much feeling, "that she is as beautiful to-day as when you last saw her; and as for her goodness, I think she was never so good as she is now. And you think you should know her?"

"I am sure of it."

"We shall see."

"Hold, my lord. Do you think she will know me?"

"That is hardly likely, Sir Rupert. She can only bear in mind a fair, white-faced child of five years; and in the tough, hardened, and bronzed campaigner of five-and-twenty, there can surely be no traces of that child left."

"But, my lord, there is in some people a sympathetic perception almost as ready and sure as actual knowledge; and I have a curiosity to see how far that gift may operate in my cousin's bosom. I feel sure that she will know me. I am so confident of it, that I would be almost willing to wager the joys of my visit upon the result."

"No, no, Rupert—you shall not do that; for I am fearful you would lose; and your loss would be a loss to myself."

"Thank you, my lord."

"No thanks, my boy. You are not only my wife's cousin, but you have saved my life; and, what is more, and, perhaps, the leading incentive, I like you. There—I am frank, you see."

And the marquis's frank avowal evidently gave the young man much pleasure, for a happy light beamed in his eyes, and his handsome face became more attractive still under its warm and heart-sent smile of gratitude.

By and by Sir Rupert asked his companion how much family he had.

"My cousin has written to me of her daughter Agnes; but she has never spoken of any other children."

"Agnes is our only child, Sir Rupert."

"And she must be now——"

"She is eighteen," said Percy.

"And," pursued the captain, with a light smile, "I shall soon have the privilege of deciding for myself whether she be as beautiful as her mother has represented."

They rode on in silence a short distance, when Rupert continued, as though speaking with himself:

"EIGHTEEN! EIGHTEEN!—And I have always pictured to myself a child. She was Isabel's child—and I could not make the mother seem else than young. Eighteen!—She must be almost a woman."

The marquis gazed upon the speaker, and then he bent his eyes to his saddle-bow; and from the expression upon his face it was evident that something of more than mere passing interest had possessed his thoughts.

Pretty soon the riders reached a point where the way was level, and as they urged their horses to a brisker gait their conversation was dropped for a time.

Night had fairly closed in when the sounds of horses' feet were heard in the court, and Lady Percy and her daughter were in the large drawing-room, where a fire had been built upon the great hearth, and where the large astrals were lighted. The marchioness had thus lighted up the apartment because she knew it would seem more cheerful to her husband.

"Were there not two horses?" asked the mother, as her daughter turned from the window back into the room.

"Yes, mother," replied Agnes. "Papa has brought company with him. It is a gentleman, I am sure."

"Very likely it is the agent."

"No, no, mother. This man is taller than the agent; and as I caught a glimpse of his face by the light of the groom's lantern, I should think him much younger."

"Perhaps your father has brought home a lover for you, Agnes—who knows?"

"There you are at fault, my dear mamma," cried the girl, with a merry laugh; "for you know that papa dreads the very sight of a man who might possibly fall in love with me. He is afraid he might lose me. But he need not worry, for I no more want a lover than he wants one for me. It will be a long time before I give my heart away."

"Ah, my child, you know not when your heart may go. The heart of a maiden of eighteen is a very curious and self-willed thing. It may fly away without your knowledge, my dear, and without your power to prevent it."

"I dare say some may do so," admitted Agnes, with a merry laugh. "But," she added, soberly, "my heart is not one of that description. The man who wins my love has got to work for it."

"And if he does work for it, he will never win it," said the mother, oracularly.

Before Agnes could make reply to this speech, the door communicating with the hall was opened, and the marquis entered, followed by a stranger.

"Isabel," he said, when he had taken his wife's hands and exchanged fond kisses with her, "here is a friend whom I picked up on the road. Can you give him a welcome?"

As Sir Eustace's companion advanced, the light of the large hanging lamp shone full upon his face, clearly revealing every perfectly formed feature, and bringing boldly out his grand form and graceful carriage. She gazed a moment—a warm, happy light beamed in her eyes—and then, as though it were a loved brother, just home from a long journey, she stepped forward and put forth her hands.

"Rupert!—Rupert!" she said. Like the flash of distant lightning upon the evening horizon she saw an answering smile dart up into the clear blue eyes; and so, without a perceptible break in her speech, she continued,—"My dear cousin, this is a joy I had not anticipated! Bless you, my dear boy! Bless you!" And as though it were still her brother, she placed one of her small white hands around upon the back of his neck, and drawing his face down to her own she kissed him upon the lips. She did not have to lay out much strength, however, in bringing his face down; nor did she give a kiss without getting one in return.

"Well!" exclaimed the marquis. "It seems to me that you are running some risk, my sweet wife."

"Risk?—Risk, Eustace?"

"I mean in so readily, and upon the mere evidence of your own fancy, kissing a bold and gallant captain of the Royal Plungers upon the belief that he is a certain cousin whom you have not seen since he was a mere prattling child of five years."

"Five years?" repeated the Marchioness, gazing first upon her husband, and then upon the floor. "So young then! So long ago!" she murmured. And then she raised her eyes once more to the face of the man she had kissed. A look of calm and heartfelt joy met her gaze,—the clear, blue eyes were swimming in a rich flood of happy, liquid light; and with a jubilant cry she flung her arm around his neck again.

"My heart told me the truth! O, Rupert! this is joy indeed.—And now, my husband, here is another kiss to pay you for bringing my dear cousin back to me."

"Say, rather, that the kiss was Rupert's, in payment for his having brought your husband back," cried the marquis. But he got the kiss first.

"What!" exclaimed Isabel, catching something in the tones of her husband which had a solemn ring. And then she noticed that his clothes were soiled; and upon his right hand she saw a livid spot, with a trace of blood.

"Mercy! You have been in danger!"

"I am not in danger now, my dear; so let us present our guest to Agnes; and at some other time I will tell you how I fell in with your cousin."

Then the marquis took his daughter by the hand, and leading her forward, he said:

"Agnes, allow me to introduce to you Captain the Honorable Sir Rupert St. John."

She had seen her mother put her arm around this man's neck and kiss him; she had seen her father bestow upon him a look of unmistakable love and esteem; and she felt it in her heart that she ought to receive him kindly for her parent's sakes. And so she did.

In all her life this was the first time that Agnes Percy had ever met a young man who was really a hero. She had seen many men of his age—some of them handsome and intelligent—but never before one who commanded her most profound respect at the very outset. In other times when she had been introduced to youthful strangers it had been an instinct with her to avoid their glances as much as possible. She knew that she was comely; she knew that she was heiress to one of the finest estates in the realm; and she knew that she had reached an age when maidens are supposed to be capable of loving; and, knowing how many would gladly win her hand, she had shrunk from the companionship of such as might have aspired to her love. But this man was different from others; and then he was her mother's own cousin, too. So she did not shrink from his gaze, but rather enjoyed the sight of his bold, handsome face; and when he smiled upon her she felt a genial warmth around the heart that was very pleasant and agreeable.

Later in the evening Mr. Drake, the agent, was announced, and the marquis said to his wife and daughter that they would have to entertain Sir Rupert until he returned.

I never saw a right-hearted, true woman who was not fond of stories and adventure, especially when told by the chief actor in the scenes described; and the marchioness and her daughter were not exceptions to the rule. They asked Rupert about the battles in which he had taken part, and when he became satisfied that they really wished him to do so, he went on with the story.

Gradually Agnes Percy gave herself entirely up to the spirit of sympathy with the speaker. She was alarmed when he was in danger; she was eager and expectant when doubt and uncertainty were in his way; tears welled up into her eyes when he was wounded and in pain; and when he came forth safe and happy a glad light irradiated her beautiful face, and a murmured "Thank God!" fell from her lips when she knew it not.

That night, when Agnes Percy was alone in her chamber, she said to herself—said it with warm enthusiasm:

"O! I hope he will stop with us a good long time!"

In her happy innocence she thought of nothing more. He was her mother's cousin!

And at this same time Rupert St. John stood by the window of his chamber, and listened to the rain-drops that pattered against the crystal lozenges.

"O! if I had been born the son of the elder brother!——I must not love her!—I must not! Only disappointment can come of it!"

Aye, Rupert—and such a disappointment is it to be as you have never yet even dreamed of!

But, thank God! the bitterest disappointments are sometimes swallowed up in a joy that is all the brighter for the gloom through which the blessing has been reached!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

To-Morrow.

Whate'er the grief that dims the eye,
Whate'er the cause of sorrow,
We turn us to the weeping sky,
And say, "We'll smile to-morrow."
And when from those we love we part,
From hope we comfort borrow,
And whisper to our aching heart,
We'll meet again to-morrow.

But when to-morrow comes, 'tis all
An image of to-day,
Still tears our heavy eyelids fill,
Still mourn we those away.
And when that morrow too is past—
(A yesterday of sorrow)—
Hope, smiling, cheats us to the last,
With visions of to-morrow!

Sorrow for the Dead.

We cannot but weep for the dead, even when every feeling, when our reason, warns us that the transition to them from life to immortality is full of happiness, that they have welcomed the voice of the angel of death as the harbinger of peace, the herald of joy. We weep over the grave, even when we know it is the bed of rest for which the weary sufferer longed, as the wayworn traveller for his home. When compelled to look, as it were, from the chambers of rejoicing upon the dismal abode of the dead, our hearts are chilled as it stands in relation to ourselves, the happy, the rich, the loved; we forget to contemplate it in relation to the wretched, the poor, the desolate, who are gone to occupy it. Even in our sorrow for the dead, our tears are stained by the selfishness that makes half our mortality; the shadow of death falls upon ourselves, and after the first bitter pang, the conviction that something we loved is gone beyond the voice of our affection, we begin to sorrow, partly, for that we too must die! If the recollection of a duty, of a kindness, can give us a foretaste of the charity that may be felt in heaven, it is when the object on whom it has been conferred has passed the precincts of the tomb. To be conscious that we have cheered the heart that has ceased to beat, is one of the first best consolations that softens our grief for "the dead we have buried out of our sight."

Cheerfulness and Moroseness.

If we are cheerful and contented, all nature smiles with us; the air seems more balmy, the sky more clear, the ground has a brighter green, the trees have a richer foliage, the flowers a more fragrant smell, the birds sing more sweetly, and the sun, moon and stars all appear more beautiful. We take our food with relish, and whatever it may be, it pleases us. We feel better for it—stronger and livelier, and fit for exertion. Now what happens to us if we are ill-tempered and discontented? Why, there is not anything which can please us. We quarrel with our food, with our dress, with our amusements, with our companions, and with ourselves. Nothing comes right for us; the weather is either too hot or too cold, too dry or too damp. Neither sun, nor moon, nor stars have any beauty; the fields are barren, the flowers lustreless, and the birds silent. We move about like some evil spirit, neither loving nor beloved by anything.

A Mother's Influence.

A man finds he cannot make his way in the world without honesty and industry, so that, although his father's example may do much, he has to depend upon his own exertions; he must work, he must be honest, or he cannot attain to any enviable rank. But the tender soothings of a mother, her sympathy, her devotedness, her forgiving temper—all this sinks deep in a child's heart; and let him wander ever so wide, let him err or let him lead a life of virtue, the remembrance of all this comes like a holy calm over his heart, and he weeps that he has offended her, or he rejoices that he has listened to her disinterested, gentle admonition.

A Gentle Hint.

A sportsman who, during the shooting season, had gone to pass a week with a friend in the country, on the strength of a general invitation, soon found, by a gentle hint, that he would have done better to wait for a special one. "I saw some beautiful scenery," was the visitor's first remark, "as I came to-day by the upper road." "You will see still finer," was the reply, "as you go back to-morrow by the lower one."

—What deduction from reason can ever apply to love? Love is a very contradiction of all the elements of our ordinary nature—it makes the proud man meek—the cheerful sad—the high-spirited tame.

—Love receives its death-wound from disgust, and is buried by oblivion.

THE SLEEPING MOTHER.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

The Earth has fallen fast asleep, her purple eyelids lie
With golden lashes darkening the splendors of her eye;
She is a loving mother, and she has a loving brood,
And so her pulse is regular, her rest is deep and good.
Break not her slumber, softly go,
O, careless-footed Wind!
A mother's sleep is sweet, you know,
Her care is left behind.

O all day long her children claim her every thought and care—
Her children's children and her own, yet she has none to spare;
Her cheerfulness is never gone, her smile is always bright,
And O! her heart is happy when her eyelids close at night;
And slumber creeps within her breast,
With a silent, joyous thrill,
And if a dream disturb her rest,
'Tis of her children still.

She's dreaming now—she slumbers soft within her azure tent,
The lofty grand pavilion of the spangled firmament,
With golden lanterns lighted to the pale horizon's hem,
Where Luna proudly pushes on her shining silver stem;
And from the sleeper's quiet heart
Some thoughts unshackled leap,
In dreams she plays the mother's part,
She's smiling in her sleep.

Dear Mother Earth! our love for her, though foster children we,
Is pure and true and fathomless as love can ever be;
Weak infants to her bosom cast, we thrive and swiftly grow,
For us she sings her sweetest songs, for us her beauties blow.
What wonder, when our Father's voice
Calls to his children, "Come!"
We often cling to her by choice,
And know no other home?

Break not her slumber, softly blow, O zephyr light and free!
She is a mighty mother, and is wiser far than we.
She always smiles—she has no fears her children will away;
She would not smile if they could flee—it may be she could say:
"Fly from my breast, fly far and fast,
And fly where'er you will,
You are my children to the last,
My love pursues you still!

* * *

WILLFUL LOTTIE;

OR,

WHAT WILL SHE DO NEXT?

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

> She is active, stirring, all fire,
> Cannot rest, cannot tire,
> o a stone she had given life.
>
> BROWNING.

Lottie Merrill was on her way from her widowed mother's rural home near Baltimore, to visit her father's sister in New York, and see if, perchance, a rich but offended old uncle, named Hiram Watson, might not cross her path.

Nothing of much importance transpired to interest her particularly, until she had changed cars; and was *en route* for Philadelphia.

This train chanced to be very much crowded. For several miles she had shared the seat with an old lady, whose rotundity was of such dimensions, as made it necessary for Lottie to make herself very comfortable in about one-fourth of the seat. However, to her great satisfaction, the old lady took her departure at one of the way stations. But just as she had smoothed out her skirts, and began to feel the luxury of breathing space, she was aroused by a soft, pleasant voice saying:

"Will you allow me to share your seat?"

Looking up, she beheld a tall, graceful gentleman, with large brilliant dark eyes, and soft black hair, pushed back from the full, high forehead, just her idea of a handsome man.

With a pleasant little bow she made room for him.

Many were the polite attentions he offered her in the way of papers, books, and information relative to the various stopping places. These she received rather coldly, remembering her brother Joe's advice to "beware of sharpers."

Surely this splendid looking fellow must be a gentleman, she thought. How she wished she knew if he was honest, so she could hear and talk to him. She wished Joe had kept his advice, and left her to follow her own inclination. When however, she found out that he was going to New York, and resided there, she was proof no longer against his continued attempts at conversation. She told him where she was going, and the name of her relatives, and was much reassured, when the suspected individual told her that he had been to college with her cousin Julian; had frequently met the young ladies at parties, and had on one occasion, (the last New Year's day), called at the house, and should in the future, with her permission, be a frequent visitor. It was all right then; she could, and did trust him, and was sorry enough, when they arrived at Jersey City, and were met by Julian Tracy, who formally presented his friend, Doctor Worth.

Placing her in the carriage waiting, while Julian looked after her baggage, Dr. Worth told her he should take an early opportunity of calling, and expressed the hope that this accidental acquaintance should be of lasting and pleasant continuance. Thanking Julian for the invitation to come soon, and pressing the hand of Lottie, he took his departure.

We shall pass over the meeting with her aunt and cousins, only saying that Mrs. Tracy was well pleased with Lottie's appearance, saying to her elder daughter:

"She is not at all stylish or showy, but piquant and decidedly taking. She will be sure to make an impression on her debut."

And so it proved. This new star in the firmament of fashionable society, quite dazzled the eyes, and turned the heads of most of the elegible young men, and indeed, her very pretty face, combined with her simplicity, the total absence of anything like Art, her confiding, child-like manner, won for her the admiration of the papa's, all of whom were willing, indeed anxious to welcome her as a daughter; should his boy be the favored one.

Lottie, to the great dissatisfaction of her aunt, would do as she would.

The principal cause of complaint was her entire disregard of the most devoted and continued attentions of young Percival Fitzhugh. He being the most desirable catch in the city; the only son and heir of a wealthy banker, who, rumor said, had declared his intention of turning over to his young hopeful the comfortable sum of a million to commence married life with. Be this as it might, Mrs. Tracy having angled in vain for him, in behalf of her daughter, welcomed the prospect of having him in the family some how.

She could keep quiet no longer, and proceeded to remonstrate with Lottie.

"I am astonished at you child! Are you going to throw away the chance that most all the girls would gladly seize? Young Fitzhugh is very much pleased with you. Just think of the splendid establishment he would place you at the head of," she said.

"Can't help it, auntie. I don't like Fitz. I am very sorry if he has any idea of offering such inducements to me. But I really think you are mistaken. He is in love only with himself," replied Lottie.

"It is of no use suggesting such brilliant prospects to Lottie, ma; for it is very plain to see to whom her heart is turning, if not entirely gone. Dr. Worth is the favored one. I admire your taste, little cousin; the doctor is a splendid fellow. I should likely enough have felt my heart in danger long ago, if it had not been guarded by two strong barriers: one being the fact of his unmistakable devotion to yourself; showing plainly how hopeless my case would be. The other quite as formidable. He is too poor to even think of marrying. He has nothing in the world but his profession, and has a widowed mother to support. It seems too hard that Fortune should have treated so shabbily one on whom Nature had bestowed so bountifully her good gifts," said May Tracy.

Lottie, humming a merry air, tripped lightly out of the room, deigning no reply. I think she dared not venture on this subject for fear of revealing what was hidden in the deepest recesses of her heart; the secure possession of which she no longer held. It was fluttering like a frightened bird, doubting, waiting only to be wooed to fly and find a haven in the bosom of young Richmond Worth.

"Joe's words *were* prophetic. But not in the light he meant," she whispered smilingly to herself. "I believe I *was* trapped and robbed in the railway cars; but to save me I cannot regret it."

Lottie had been with her aunt about a month, when a very remarkable event took place, which much affected her future welfare. But I must not anticipate.

Her cousins May and Florence had made an engagement for her to sit for a picture at a celebrated photograph gallery.

The day was beautifully clear and bright—but bitterly cold. Lottie declared she would not go if they ordered the carriage.

"It was too hard on the poor horses, and the driver had a terrible cold besides. It was really useless, and she wanted to look at the pretty things on the way. If they got tired they could ride in the cars. She liked the fun of that too."

So she carried her way, and they departed, accompanied by their constant attendant, Mr. Fitzhugh.

Lunch was waiting for their return. At last they came.

"Where is Lottie?" was the universal question.

"Indeed, ma, Lottie is the most wilful and determined girl I ever saw, and does the strangest things. You might just as well try to stop wind blowing as to stop her when she makes up her mind to do anything," exclaimed May.

"Well, tell us where she is. I'll venture all my worldly goods that whatever she has done is good and kind—yes, and proper too," said Julian, who was very much attached to Lottie, in a cousinly way.

"I'll tell you what she did, and then you will see how proper it was. Where she is, we don't know.

"After we got through down town, Flory complained of being tired, and so we determined to ride home. Mr. Fitzhugh was going to engage a carriage, when Lottie insisted on going in the cars, and off she flew and jumped in one just passing. Of course we had to follow.

"The car was quite crowded, and when we had gone a few blocks, there came in an old man, miserably dressed, with a large carpet-bag. Up sprang Lottie, and putting her arms around him, placed him tenderly and comfortably in her seat. Mr. Fitzhugh made her take his, then.

"I was mortified enough. I was fearful the people might think he was something to us. We rode on, and I was beginning to feel a little more comfortable, when the car stopped and the old man was making his way out; judge of my horror and amazement when she whispered to me:

"'I will be on presently. I'm going to help this old gentleman a little way with his luggage. It is so slippery he might fall.'

"The last we saw of her, she was holding him up as he crossed the street.

"Now, Julian, what do you think of this *proper* behavior?"

"Why, May, there is nothing really wrong about it. Lottie is decidedly something different from the modern young ladies. Very impulsive, acting directly from the promptings of a pure, kind heart. The direct cause of her action to-day I think you may attribute to reverence and veneration," answered her brother.

"Here comes the truant now. Come, answer for yourself, little one. Here are grave complaints against you. You are charged with violating all the rules regulating the conduct, airs, and graces of town-bred ladies. We will have to send you back to the country, for we shall never be able to make a fine young lady of you," said Julian.

Lottie glanced quickly, saw the merry twinkle in the eye of her cousin, and understood him. Turning to her aunt she said:

"Aunty, I'm sorry if I have displeased you, but I do not regret an action of common humanity. I have sins enough to answer for, without adding one for willful neglect of an aged person. I've returned safely, and feel satisfied and happy."

"How far did you escort your protégé, Lottie, and how did he receive your attentions?" asked Flory.

"Not very far; he insisted on my leaving him, but I did not until I saw a pleasant-looking German boy, standing doing nothing; so I slipped fifty cents in his hand, and asked him to go home with the old gentleman and keep him from slipping down. He thanked me many times, asked my name, and where I lived; and when I bade him good-bye, he said, 'Heaven bless you, you are a good child, and I feel sure that this kind act will be remembered by you very pleasantly as long as you live. When you pray, ask that grace may be sent from above, to comfort and soften a lonely, hard-hearted old man. Good-bye! we may meet again,' and so I left him; and, indeed, I could hardly help crying, I felt so sorry for him. He is a gentleman, I know, for he talks so well."

Weeks passed on, and Lottie's visit was near its close. Rumor said (and it was generally believed) that Dr. Worth had won from Lottie the consent to be his. One young friend, wiser than others, had declared that she knew it to be a positive fact that Lottie had said she was too young to marry yet awhile, and could very well afford to wait until the doctor should be in circumstances to justify his marrying. How true this was, I cannot tell, but feel perfectly safe in asserting that there was a happy and perfect understanding between the two.

It was her last day. On the morrow, she was to bid adieu to her kind friends and loving relatives.

They were all loitering over the breakfast-table, when the servant brought Lottie a little note. Opening it, she read aloud:

"My good child, come to the old man you were kind to. The bearer has a carriage, and will wait for you.

"Let your cousin or some friend accompany you."

"This is very strange. You are not going, Lottie?" said May and Flory, simultaneously.

"Yes, she is, I see," said Julian, "and I will, with pleasure, go with her. There is something more in this than we can see."

They were soon on their way. After about a half-hour's ride, they stopped before a large, old-fashioned, gloomy-looking brick house. The driver opened the carriage-door, and said:

"Here is the place, sir."

Helping Lottie out and up the stone steps, Julian was about to raise the handle of the dusty knocker, when the door was suddenly opened by an old woman, who said:

"Come in, Miss. The master has been waiting for you."

Opening a door upon the first floor, she ushered them in.

Seated in a large easy chair, paler and thinner than when she last saw him, was the old man—Hiram Watson—for so it proved to be. Holding out his hand, he said:

"I knew you would come, my good child. You are very like your mother was, at your age. Ah, I see you are looking surprised, but I knew your mother well. Can you remember ever hearing her speak of her Uncle Hiram?"

"Oh yes, often. Are you Uncle Hiram? I am so glad to know you!"

Springing, she pressed her lips to his withered brow, and seated herself at his feet, saying:

"Speak to Julian, my cousin, won't you, uncle?"

"Excuse me, sir—I was so engaged with this dear child, that I've been very negligent. I am glad to meet you. Be seated, sir."

Turning again to Lottie, he said:

"Providence ordained that I should meet you, Lottie, and feel the influence of your loving kindness. I have been quite sick since I last saw you, but with God's blessing and the kind attendance of the good doctor, I am much better now, and the doctor says I am able to travel a little. I want to go home with you, little one. I'm so lonesome, I want to finish my days with your mother. Do you think she will welcome me?"

"Yes, yes, uncle—she loves you, I know. She wanted I should try to find you, but——"

"But what, my dear?"

"I was afraid you would think I was fortune-hunting, so I would not try to find you," said she, blushing deeply.

"Well, my child, Heaven willed that you should. Ah, here is my friend and doctor: my niece, Miss Merrill—Doctor Worth."

Richmond Worth was standing transfixed with wonder. Lottie and Julian were very much enjoying his surprise. At last, he recovered himself, and exclaimed:

"Why, Lottie, is it possible?"

"And I must say, why, Doctor, is it possible that you know my niece?" said Uncle Hiram.

"Yes, sir, I am fortunate in the possession of such a great pleasure," said the doctor, casting a look of pride and love towards Lottie.

"If I can read looks, I should say you knew each other well, and liked each other better. I am glad, very glad. I think I shall attempt match-making once more, and meet with a happier result this time. Doctor, this dear child's mother was my niece and adopted daughter. I brought her from Maryland, educated her, and wanted to marry her to my ward, but she chose differently. I have never seen her since. This little one has made it all right now. I am going home with her, and after a little while, if you should follow, and ask our consent, I think neither she nor I would say nay. And Uncle Hiram's wedding presents will be no mean dowry, but a worthy setting for so pure and valuable a gem as this," patting Lottie's head.

The charming look of gratitude, and the warmth with which the young doctor pressed his hand, was a sufficient answer for the old uncle.

Lottie's departure was postponed for a few days, and then, accompanied by her uncle, she returned to her country home. The welcome which greeted the old man was so earnest and loving, that he was fully satisfied that his remaining days would be very happy there.

With every month came young Worth, urging Lottie for a speedy union; and before another year had passed he came once more, bringing Julian, his mother and sisters. There was a quiet little wedding.

After the ceremony Uncle Hiram placed a packet in his niece's hand; which opening, she found a document putting her in the immediate possession of fifty thousand dollars.

Aunt Cloe, hearing this, left her kitchen, at the risk of burning her waffles, to dart into the parlor, and exclaim, to the amusement of all:

"Old Cloe's words nebber falls. Didn't I profecise that you'd ketch a husban' and a fortun'! What you dun say now?" and she made her exit amidst peals of laughter.

"I say it is better to be born 'lucky than rich,'" said Joe.

"I say Lottie was born *both*," said Julian. "Lucky, you will *all* admit; and also *rich*, in the possession of the truest, rarest qualities of a good, pure heart."

Lottie's and the doctor's example was followed by others.

Julian, to Lottie's great joy, wooed and won her dear friend, the elder Miss Bingham. May succeeded in catching young Fitzhugh; and Flory's bright eyes made such sad havoc on the heart of the young minister who presided at Lottie's wedding, that report says she is about to try and heal the wounds she inflicted.

* * *

SOLDIER LOVERS;

OR,

IDA'S FOLLY.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Ida Rowe was a gay, bright girl, one of a type not at all uncommon, and a favorite in the circle of society in which she mingled. She thought no evil, and intended none. Staid, critical, carping people called her wild. By another class she was sometimes named "gay"—with a look and tone that implied that the word meant something much worse than it's very harmless dictionary signification.

Fond of fun and frolic, and endowed with a fund of romance that made her often covetously grasp an opportunity, or, in fact, create one, to do an out-of-the-way thing, or mingle in some racy act sure to set the tongues of gossips wagging, make gray heads shake with disapproval, and serious, friendly faces take a new shade of gravity.

"Those that know nothing, fear nothing," a wise old aunt of mine was fond of saying. Sometimes the "fearing nothing" is cheaply earned by the protecting ignorance, but alas! it costs dear at others, and a pure soul shrinks and shudders in the presence of baleful knowledge and willingly dares the penalty.

Then there is a fascination in daring mysterious danger, for some characters, and Ida was one of these. She wanted to test the danger which vaguely menaced her—"to see the folly of it" for herself, and so was apt to do hazardous things, braving the danger she did not understand and half despised.

In this spirit, during the war, she answered one of those advertisements purporting to come from soldiers, and representing the writers so stationed with their commands, as to be shut out from the comforts of home, and the privilege of female society. It was a touching complaint, heart-rending in effect, and really made others beside Ida, older and supposed to be endowed with some of the valuable knowledge which life stands ready to bestow, feel great sympathy for the poor youngsters, who had so touchingly sacrificed so much on the altar of their country.

It was, as Ida said, very little to write a few letters just to cheer those poor fellows, and what patriotic maiden would withhold so small a contribution to the comfort of her country's defenders, who probably had no books to read, or pictorial papers, and very little better to tempt their delicate appetites than pork and hard-tack. From her point of view, writing such letters from such an intention was certainly right. When she represented the case, she for some reason unknown, left out all reference to the "fun."

It was in the brief interval in which Ida was engaged in testing the success of her quasi patriotic plan, that her little period of thought took place. Some advice, and some reproof, reached her, but she passed them both by without attention. Both, I am sorry to say, were usually wasted on her, though not more so than was generally the case, on this occasion.

She wrote her letters—two of them—mixtures of fun, patriotism and romance, in about equal proportions. On both sides the *personnel* of the parties was described. Manly beauty, angelic loveliness, bravery, devotion to country. Hearts, lives, feelings, all were brimming with the most ecstatic devotion to—love and country. Ida felt sure she needed to hear, to know, no more. Nothing was necessary but to fix upon the supreme object of her affections, and, her choice once made, to "let the other down" as speedily and as softly as possible; to send her photograph to the favored one, and for the sake of justice and kindness, to suggest another *object* for the rejected, who seemed very "accommodating," and quite ready to love to order, or not to love at all, it mattered very little which, a thing for which Ida was thankful, though, it must be acknowledged, not exactly well pleased.

At length she made her choice, principally decided by a remarkably handsome picture, with a radiant smile gleaming through a fine moustache.

She liked the other very well—in fact, I believe that she would have chosen him in the absence of the "other dear charmer"—an idea very refreshing, since it proved that love and heart had not suffered. But, I believe, still she was better than she seemed, for—to her credit be it spoken—when she read the note of her accepted, which bore his warm thanks for her goodness, and bore also the awful tidings of the sad, early fate which doomed the other to death upon the blood-stained field where "his brave young life had met its fitting close," she felt very sad.

But she dried her tears, looked at her handsome lover as set forth by his picture, and smiled. For at least twenty-four hours, she wearied Heaven with thanks for the sparing of his life.

She became a miracle of constancy. I believe she thought so handsome a lover would never be found again, and worth and beauty were for her contained in the same words. Perhaps she was not then tired of flirting, or of her new idol; at any rate, she was both constant and devoted.

The romance really seemed to be going on swimmingly, and Ida was, or believed she was, happy. It was not a very romantic name he possessed—Luther Austin,—but then his being so very handsome balanced all that.

The remainder of this romance happened after the war. Ida's father had rather more to do with it than was quite agreeable.

Luther Austin came home—his "occupation was gone," as I believe has been observed of an other individual, and there were some who wished him gone too. He was less handsome than his picture, or it more beautiful than he. *One* of these opinions the gossips held; but as for Ida's father, his opinion was that the soldier's beauty passed show. But he did not announce his conclusion at once.

He was not pleased with him or the projected marriage, and made some remarks about the lover's habits, which did not reveal themselves to the parental approval.

Ida, herself, was not quite pleased, either, and remonstrated. The next thing which Mr. Austin did was to organize an immediate quarrel—*followed*, like the majority of lover's quarrels, by a reconciliation, and a demand for an immediate marriage.

Ida demurred, and hesitated. The nearer view her lover had given of himself, made her desirous for delay.

A number of her notes and letters she had foolishly and trustingly allowed to remain in his possession. They were shown among the associates he favored, with free comments, not at all to Ida's advantage.

Then Mr. Austin took himself off, and the letters too, leaving around Ida the savor of an ill-name.

It is neither possible, nor profitable, to display the unsavoriness of this deed. The matter was at length settled—in a way. Dollars were exchanged, and the vile fellow, whom no other arguments would reach, was bought off. For the money, he agreed to leave the girl he had professed to love, alone, and to yield the letters, out of which he had made a trade so profitable.

Ida has grown sadder and wiser. She indulges in but few words, bitterly expressing much.

Her life seemed stained and soiled, almost lost. Peace seems now to be settling over it, and, to unseeming eyes, forgetfulness; but who that has suffered believes in that as possible!

How often its hollow sham covers sorrow that it only seems to hide, let Ida Rowe's sad life prove.

* * *

Present and the Future.

OUR minds should often dwell on the instructive truth, that every object in this life is unenduring. We should be prepared to part with them, or to withdraw from them at God's pleasure. Families must separate. The fondest ties must be dissolved. The endearing sympathies of friendship and affection have no pledge of perpetuity, even while we continue here. Estrangement will sometimes intrude, and, like the serpent in the garden, poison many an earthly paradise, that seemed designed to be the home of lasting pleasures. Yes, all below that can allure our eyes, or kindle our imaginations, is short-lived. It is our wisdom, therefore, to sit lightly on the world, and by God's grace to estimate its smiles and frowns, according to the holy Oracles, and in the balance of the sanctuary. If our devout trust reposes on the bosom of our Saviour, we may complacently bear all on earth for his sake, be comforted amid the instabilities of life, and in the prospect of a tearless, sightless, painless world of immortality and glory, breathe the devout spirit, and depart with the triumphant emotions of *those who die in the Lord.*

* * *

Self-Flattery.

We find a momentary gratification in the indulgence of appetite, or in obeying the dictates of our passions, and our wills, and forget the lessons of reason and revelation. We bring disease and misfortune upon ourselves, and we are so prone to self-flattery as well as self-indulgence, that we say, "I could not avoid it; I obeyed the dictates of nature." Thus we charge our own faults and their consequences on our Creator. The intemperate man says, "I only seek the gratification which nature points out or makes necessary;" he fires his blood with wine and brandy, and then flies to the haunts of impurity. Still he says, "I have these impulses from nature." If strife and murder, or disease and death, follow, all must of course be charged on nature. There is no evil which man brings upon himself by his own selfishness, that he does not endeavor to impute to necessity, fate, nature, or the Creator of the universe.

* * *

—Quarrels would never last long, if the fault were on one side only.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A CITY exquisite having become agriculturally ambitious, went in search of a farm, and finding one for sale, began to bargain for it. The seller mentioned, as one of the farm's recommendations, that it had a very cold spring on it. "Ah—aw," said the fop, "I won't take it then, for I've heard that a cold spring ruined the crops last year, and I don't want a place with such a drawback upon it."

A CANADIAN paper says, "The people living near Lake Memphramagog, between Vermont and the New Dominion, have a big thing in their sea-serpent in that lake; the only trouble being that he is so fearfully large and long that a dispute is imminent as to how much of him is in the United States and how much in Canada."

A THIRSTY Quaker, having stopped at a Long Island tavern to get a pot of beer, and observing that the measure was deficient, asked the landlord how many casks he drew in a month. "Ten," was the reply. "And wouldst thou not like to draw *eleven*, my friend?" "Yes." "Then I'll tell thee how: *fill thy measures!*"

THE daughter of a Long Island toll-gate keeper has got her papa into trouble by "dead-heading" her lover through the gate. Why should the girl be molested for such a matter? Like one of Shakespeare's heroines, she simply
"Never told (*tolled*) her love."

"CAN you tell me," asked a pompous school-committee-man of a modest little girl, "why Nature did not make asparagus grow with each end equally succulent?" "Because, if it had, it would have been impossible for man to hold it in his fingers," was the satisfactory reply.

AN Ohio paper says that the Female College at College Hill, in that State, recently sent out a graduating class of fifteen young ladies, every one of whom was elegantly fitted to live on the fortune of some appreciative man alive to the advantages of female education.

A GENTLEMAN was talking to a friend, in the presence of his attorney, about the value of honesty. "*Honesty!*" said the attorney, "what is *honesty?*" "What is that to *you?*" retorted the gentleman; "don't meddle with things which do not concern you!"

VERY FUNNY.—One of our city judges lately decided that a boarding-house keeper has a right to box the ears of her boarders when they complain of the food, or of the manner in which it is served, in a way calculated to hurt a lady's feelings.

A SCOTCH landlady, being told by a customer that he hoped she put no pernicious ingredients into her liquor, retorted, "There's nae thing pernicious put into our barrels but the exciseman's stick."

IT is not always a mark of frankness to possess an open countenance. An alligator is a deceitful creature, and yet he presents an open countenance, when it is in the very act of taking you in.

THERE is a landlord in Boston who is in the habit of placing an extra fork beside the plate of such boarders as have not paid promptly—being an intimation to "fork over" likewise.

A GENTLEMAN who was on his death-bed, surrounded by a conclave of physicians, appealed to them in piteous tones, "My dear sirs, whatever you do, please let me die a *natural death!*"

A WAG has truly said, that if some men could come out of their coffins and read the inscriptions on their tombstones they would think they had got into the wrong grave.

AN exchange paper says that "the town of Rochester, Vt., has erected a $1600 granite soldiers' monument." What kind of fellows are "granite soldiers?"

A GROCER in Washington advertises that he has "whiskey for sale, *that has been drunk by all the Presidents*, from Old Hickory down to the present time."

WHY do ladies have to replenish their wardrobes so often? Because their new clothes are sure to be *worn out* as soon as they get them.

* * *

CURRENT ITEMS.

A PHYSICIAN in Chicago, having been summoned to testify as an expert for a railroad company, refused to give his testimony unless the company would first pay him a $20 fee. He said a lawyer never gave a professional opinion, in a lawsuit, without a fee, and he didn't see why a doctor should. The judge ordered the company to deposit $20 with the clerk of the court, to abide his (the judge's) decision of the point raised, and the doctor then testified.

A SINGULAR CASE OF POISONING.—In Connecticut recently a boy killed a spotted adder with a stick, and soon after took that part of the stick which had come in contact with the snake into his hand. He was immediately seized by severe pain in the hand and arm, and his body began to swell, and was covered with red and black spots. Whiskey cured him.

THE factory of a manufacturer in North Adams, Mass., has been standing idle for three weeks, because he would not discharge a workman who was obnoxious to his other employees; and a few evenings ago the manufacturer, having been called out of his house, was brutally attacked by a gang of men with clubs, who beat and injured him severely.

THE following is presented as a cure for the bite of a mad dog: Mix one pound of common salt in a quart of water; then bathe and squeeze the wound with the same, one hour; and then bind fresh salt on the wound for twelve hours. We do not know as this remedy would prove efficacious; but it might be tried in the absence of other means of cure.

NOT long since a Kentucky woman, after several hours of beating and threatening of death to her and her children by her drunken husband, killed him with an ax, to prevent his shooting them. As the brute had two loaded guns in his possession, the court held that the woman was justified in thus protecting herself and children.

DAVID WAGNER, a wood-chopper in Kansas, was attacked by a bear while he was eating his lunch, but leaping for his ax, and dropping his dinner, and the bear becoming absorbed in gobbling up the latter, the wood-chopper dealt him a blow on the skull which disabled him, and then dispatched him at his ease.

AS a schooner from Gloucester, Mass., was going into Vineyard Sound, on Sunday morning last, she was struck by lightning, and both masts were splintered; but no damage was done to the hull, nor was any member of the crew injured, although they were all prostrated by the shock.

WHILE a cattle-ship, plying between Texan ports and New Orleans, was carrying three hundred oxen across the Gulf of Mexico, there came up a violent storm, and the packed cattle were pitched, and thrown, and trampled, until one hundred and nineteen of them were killed.

THE editor of the Wellsville (Ohio) *Union* says he knows five men in that place who sent seven dollars each to a swindling concern in this city for "prizes," of the drawing of which they had received notice. Of course, they have not since heard of their money.

A YOUNG mechanic who refused to "stand treat" on beginning work in an establishment in Philadelphia, was bound by his comrades to an iron pillar, and subjected to such ill-usage as to endanger his life.

THE upper floor of a manufacturing establishment in New Britain, Ct., fell upon the operatives at work on the floor beneath, on Thursday of last week, and killed one of them, a young lady.

FIVE young ladies, in Salem, Ill., having been offered $100 if they could and would saw a load of wood, twice in two, in one day, they accepted the task and accomplished it triumphantly.

A SAW-MILL has been erected in Iowa which is driven by an engine of nine-hundred horse-power, and gives employment to a thousand men—the biggest thing of the kind in the world.

A MUSIC-TEACHER was robbed of $160, on a Tenth avenue car, on Saturday evening last, by five pickpockets, who fled with their plunder so fast that no policeman could track them.

A PLAYED-OUT mule which was captured in the train of Jeff. Davis, in 1865, was recently sold at Macon, Ga., for $81, on account of its "historic connections."

A WEAVER, in Fall River, began to bleed at the lungs so violently the other morning, that he died in less than ten minutes.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A BUSY LIFE.

By HORACE GREELEY.

No. XLIX.

THE FUTURE OF CALIFORNIA.

I linger yet by the shores of the vast Pacific, for I feel that the general mind is still inadequately impressed with the majestic promise that impels the resistless tendency of our Gothic race toward the sands of that mighty sea. I do grievously err if the historian of a future century does not instance the discovery of the Columbia by a Yankee and the finding of gold in upper California so soon after that country had fallen into our hands, as among the most memorable and fortunate incidents in the annals of our continent, and hence of mankind.

On gold *per se*, I place no high estimate. If all the science and labor which has been devoted by our people to the discovery and extraction of the Precious Metals, had been as faithfully applied to the production of Iron, Coal, Copper, Lead, Tin, Salt, Gypsum, Marble, Slate, &c., I believe our country would have been richer and our people wiser and happier. Even if we could regard the abundant possession of Gold and Silver as a chief good, it is plain that the countries which produce are not those which most amply retain and enjoy them.

But mines or deposits of Gold and Silver are prominent among the means whereby attention and population are drawn to a region previously unpeopled, or thinly peopled by savages. Men rush madly and in thousands to a district reported auriferous; defying famine, heat, cold, pestilence, and even death itself. Mining or washing for gold combines the fascinations of gambling—the chances of sudden riches—with the sober incitements of regular and laudable industry; hence, it always did and always will allure vast numbers to brave peril and privation in its behoof. In time, the bubble bursts; the glamour is dispelled; but thousands have meantime found new homes and formed new habits; hence, a new civilized community.

I judge that gold-mining in California is nearly "played out." True, there are many good veins there, which will continue to be worked at a profit for hundreds of years yet, during which many more and some better will doubtless be discovered and opened; but this is sober business, requiring capital, science, luck, patience, to insure success; while the jovial, free-handed heroes of pick and pan have passed away forever—some to Nevada; some to Arizona; others to Montana, Idaho, &c., &c.—many to the land of shadows—and the river-beds and "gulches" that knew them shall know them no more. California still exports gold largely; but most of it is produced in Nevada, Montana, British Columbia, &c., &c. She for years produced Fifty Millions per annum; she has fallen off at least half; she is likely soon to fall still lower. I presume the child is born who will live to see her annual product fall below Ten Millions.

Yet her natural wealth will still be great, being varied, vast, and indestructible. I group it under these heads:

I. *Soil.*—Of her ninety millions of acres, I should deem not over twenty millions decidedly arable; but these are, for the most part, exceedingly fertile. I judge that her great valleys were once arms of the sea, since gradually filled up by the continual abrasion and wearing away of the slopes of her omnipresent mountains. Many of them have now from 100 to at least 1,000 feet in depth of warm, mellow soil—a marine deposit of sand, clay and vegetable mould, in nearly equal proportions, very rarely containing a stone. I never saw land better calculated to produce large crops year after year with a moderate outlay of labor. The absence of rain in Summer and early Autumn keeps down weeds, while the unclouded, fervid sun hastens growth and insures perfection. I am confident that cotton, and even cane, might be grown to profit throughout the southern half of the State, in which the fig, the olive, and the apricot, grow luxuriantly and ripen unfailingly.

II. *Water.*—Though I saw large fields of heavy Indian corn which grew and ripened without receiving a drop of rain, I nevertheless realize and admit that water is a desirable facility to vegetable growth and maturity. And, as cultivation is mostly confined to valleys and the lower slopes of mountains, water is abundantly procurable. Artesian wells are easily dug; their flow is apt to be generous as well as constant; and a small stream well managed amply irrigates a very large field. Trees and vines root deep in that rich, facile mould; the grape needs a very little water for two years, and none thereafter; while its culture requires half the work needed here or in Europe, because our frequent rains evoke innumerable weeds. I estimate that a tun of Grapes may be produced in California with half the labor required to produce them in Italy; and that Silk, most semi-tropical Fruits, and I trust Tea, also, may be produced with equal facility. Wheat and other small grains yield largely and surely. I saw thousands of acres, that had been two months' cut and shocked, yet still awaited the coming of the circulating thresher; other fields were yet uncut (Sept. 1st), though long so dead-ripe that a large portion of the grain must be shelled out and lost in the field, even under the most careful handling. I saw fifty acres of choice tree-fruits—mainly Peaches and Apples—in a single patch; the Peaches rotting by hundreds of bushels, because they could not be gathered and marketed so fast as they ripened. I saw vast tracts of good Mustard, self-sown and growing wild from year to year, though apparently as good an article as ever ripened. The intense drouth of her long, cloudless, dewless Summer, produces cracks and fissures in the earth into which grains and seeds drop when dead-ripe; rains come and close the fissures in November and later; the self-sown seed germinates and produces a "volunteer" crop—a full one of Mustard, but a half-crop of Wheat, &c. I saw, at the Mission of San Jose, giant pear-trees, planted some scores of years ago by the Jesuits, and producing largely, but of indifferent fruit, till a Yankee acquired and grafted them, when he sold their product the next year but one in San Francisco so as to net him $100 from each tree. I look forward to a day when this country's supply of Raw Silk, as well as of Raisins and other dried fruits, will reach us from our own Pacific coast.

The rains of California are ample, but confined to Winter and Spring. In time, her streams will be retained in her mountains by dams and reservoirs, and, instead of descending in floods to overwhelm and devastate, will be gradually drawn away throughout the Summer to irrigate and refresh. For a while, water will be applied too profusely, and injury thus be done; but experience will correct this error, and then California's valleys and lower slopes will produce more food to nourish and fruit to solace the heart of man than any other Twenty Millions of acres on earth.

III. *Timber.*—Her highlands are mainly valuable for timber and pasturage only. There are more tuns of valuable timber in the Sierra Nevada than in our whole country east of the Rocky Mountains and southward of the latitude of Chicago. Railroads will yet render much of it commercially available, and incite its diffusion to every country and island washed by the great ocean. Its value will be found to surpass that of all the minerals covered by it, or ever shrouded from the avaricious gaze of man.

I close with a mere glance at San Francisco; because her age has nearly doubled since I saw her, and her population, wealth, and business, as well. At the mouth of the only considerable river that enters the Pacific from our continent—the Columbia and the Youkon excepted—with a fair entrance, and an ample, safe harbor, I judge that the Pacific Railroad fixes and assures her destiny as the second city of America—the emporium wherein the furthest East will exchange its products with the remotest West. I dislike her chilly August fogs and winds, her blowing, drifting sands; I should wish her relieved of the giant sand-bank which centuries have piled up between her and the Pacific; but then her Western gales would be fiercer and sharper than now; so it is best to leave her as she is. Since twenty years have raised her from a naked beach to a city of 100,000 souls, who can doubt that eighty more will see these swelled to, at least, one million! May Intelligence and Virtue keep even step with her material progress! may the great-grandchildren of her adventurous pioneers rejoice in the knowledge that her stormy, irregular youth has given place to a sober, respected, beneficent maturity! may her influence on the side of Freedom, Knowledge, Righteousness, be evermore greatly felt and greatly blessed throughout the awaking, wondering, plastic Western world!

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HAYING!

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Alas for the poetry of farming! All the songs of milk-maids must be now listened for in the old English poets. The whetting of the mower's scythe is almost over—quite over—on my farm! Instead of that, one hears the sharp rattle of the mower, and sees the driving man quite at his ease riding round and round the meadow, for all the world as if he were out airing! Whereas, heretofore, two acres would be counted a large day's work; now, ten and twelve are easily accomplished!

Nor is the contrast less remarkable in all the after work. When I was a boy, I was placed in line, with all the men that could be mustered, to shake out the hay with forks; and after a few hours, all hands were called to go over the ground and turn it. To do this rapidly, and yet so that the bottom side shall really come to the top, was no small knack. Now, a *tedder*, with one man riding, will literally do the work of ten men, and do it far better than the most expert can. Have you ever seen a *tedder*? I have now a perfect one. The grass rolls up behind it and foams, I was going to say, like water behind the wheels of a steamer. The grass leaps up and whirls as if it were amazeingly tickled with such dealings.

The result is, that unless grass is very heavy, and the weather very bad, you may cut your hay in the morning and get it into your barn before night, in far better condition than it used to be when it required never less than two, and generally a part of three days to cure it.

But, I have forgotten the *Horse Rake*. Instead of the old-fashioned, long-handled rake, and the five or six men, pulling and hauling to get the grass into windrows, that same fellow, with that same horse, rides his luxurious rake, and in a fifth part of the time formerly required, puts it into equally good shape. Indeed, haying, if it has lost its poetry, has also lost its drudgery. A man can now manage a hundred acres of grass easier than he formerly could twenty. The only thing that remains to be made easy is pitching on and off the load. It is true that horse-forks have been invented, but I have never seen any that did their work well; and in my barn, at any rate, the old work of pitching and mowing remains; and if you wish to know what fun is, get on to the mow, under the slate roof of my barn, on a hot day, and let *Tim* pitch off hay, as he will if I give him the wink. You will have to step lively, and even then, you will often be seen emerging from heaps of hay thrown over you, like a rat from a bunch of oakum. And then it is so pleasant, when a man is all a-sweat, to have his shirt filled with hay seed, each particular particle of which makes believe that it is a flea, and wiggles and tickles upon every square inch of your skin, until you are half desperate!

It is the second of July, and my grass is all cut, and the last load is rolling into the barn while I write. How sweet it smells! How jolly the children are that have been mounted on the top of the load; and their little scarlet jackets peep out from their nest while Tim stands guard and nurse. A child that has not ridden up from the meadow to the barn on a load of hay has yet to learn one of the luxuries of exultant childhood! What care they for jolts, when the whole load is a vast and multiplex spring? The more the wagon *jounces* the better they like it! Then come the bars, leading into the lane with maple trees on each side. The limbs reach over, and the green leaves kiss the children over and over again. So would I, if I were a green leaf, and not consider myself so green after all! And so the load slowly rolls up the hill. There is no such thing as momentum in an ox. He is always at a dead pull and at the very hardest. But the children like it! The slower, the longer is the ride! Let them take all the comfort they can. By and by they will be grown, and own fine carriages, and roll in style through the streets. But there is many a fair face that rides in a silk-lined coach, with a sad heart, and would go back if she could, oh how gladly, to her joyous ride on a load of hay!

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—New York is a great city. During the recent National Democratic Convention, this fact became particularly apparent. On that occasion thousands upon thousands and tens of thousands of strangers flocked hither, but their presence amid the great throng of humanity in our streets was not perceptible. They would have overcrowded any other city on the continent; but in New York their numbers were not felt. The great metropolis took them all in, and no doubt "did for" many of them, without an effort.

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Mr. Cobb's New Story.—In this number of the *Ledger*, we begin the publication of a new story, by Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., entitled Agnes Percy; or, The Rival Heirs of Abbotswold. This is one of the very best stories which Mr. Cobb has ever written.

JOSIAH QUINCY.

BY JAMES PARTON.

Born in 1772, and died in 1864! Ninety-two years of happy, prosperous, and virtuous life! How was it that, in a world so full of the sick, the miserable, and the unfortunate, Josiah Quincy should have lived so long, and enjoyed, during almost the whole of his life, uninterrupted happiness and prosperity? Let us see.

He was born in Boston, in a house the walls of which are still standing, in a part of the street now called Washington street. His father was that young Josiah Quincy who went away on a patriotic mission to London when this boy was three years of age, and only returned to die within sight of his native land, without having delivered the message with which Doctor Franklin had charged him. Left an orphan at so early an age, his education was superintended by one of the best mothers a boy ever had; and this was the first cause both of the length and of the happiness of his life. This admirable mother was so careful lest her fondness for her only son should cause her to indulge him to his harm, that she even refrained from caressing him, and, in all that she did for him, thought of his welfare first, and of her own pleasure last, or not at all. To harden him, she used to have him taken from a warm bed in winter, as well as in summer, and carried down to a cellar kitchen, and there dipped three times in a tub of cold water. She even accustomed him to sit in wet feet, and endeavored in all ways to toughen his physical system against the wear and tear of life.

This boy (who only died three years ago) was old enough during the Revolutionary war to remember some of its incidents. "I imbibed," he once wrote, "the patriotism of the period, was active against the British, and with my little whip and astride my grandfather's cane, I performed prodigies of valor, and more than once came to my mother's knees declaring that I had driven the British out of Boston." Like all other healthy boys, he was a keen lover of out-of-door sports of every kind. "My heart," he wrote, "was in ball and marbles." And yet, in accordance with the custom of the schools of that time, he was compelled to sit on the same hard bench every day, four hours in the morning, and four hours in the afternoon, studying lessons which it was impossible so young a child could value or understand. A boy of less elastic mind and less vigorous constitution of body must have been injured by this harsh, irrational discipline. It seems only to have taught him patience and fortitude. Being a member of a rich and ancient family, he enjoyed every advantage of education which America then afforded, and graduated from Harvard College, in 1790, with honor. He was soon after admitted to the bar; but as he was not dependant upon his profession for a maintenance, he was not a very diligent or famous lawyer.

I have said that he was a very happy man. This is almost equivalent to saying that he was very happily *married*, since the weal or woe of most men's lives chiefly depends upon the wisdom with which they choose their life's companion. Josiah Quincy was indeed most fortunately married, and yet he does not appear to have exercised his judgment in the choice of a wife. In seven days after he first saw her face he was engaged to be married to her. It happened thus:

On a certain Sunday evening, in 1794, being then twenty-two years of age, he went, according to his custom, to visit one of his aunts, who lived in Boston. He found at his aunt's house a Miss Morton, a young lady from New York, of whom he had never before heard, and who was so little remarkable in her appearance that she made no impression on his mind. In the course of the evening, a female relative who was present asked him to go into the next room, as she wished to consult him on some affair of business. While they were talking, the strange lady began to sing one of the songs of Burns with a clearness of voice and with a degree of taste and feeling which charmed and excited him beyond anything he had ever experienced. He immediately threw down the law papers which he had been examining, and returned to the company. Miss Morton sang several other songs, to the great delight of all who heard her, and to the unbounded rapture of this particular young gentleman. When the singing was over he entered into conversation with her, and discovered her to be an intelligent, well-informed, unaffected and kind-hearted girl. In short, he fell in love with her upon the spot, and when the young lady left Boston a week after, he was engaged to her.

Some time elapsed, however, before they were married. She was a young lady of highly respectable connections and considerable fortune. The marriage was suitable in all respects, and they lived together fifty-three happy years. This most fortunate union was, no doubt, one of the main causes of the singular peace and uninterrupted happiness of his life.

It was expected, at that time, that a man of fortune, talents and education, like Josiah Quincy, would enter public life. In 1805 he was elected a member of Congress by the Federalists of Boston, a party of which he was a warm adherent, and to which he clung as long as it existed. His son tells us, in an excellent biography of his father, recently published, that, to the last of his life, when he was in reality a member of the Republican party, the old man still called himself a Federalist. Having been elected to Congress, he did a most extraordinary thing: he actually set to work to *prepare himself*, by a study of politics and history, to discharge the duties of the place! He even learned the French language, in order to be able to converse with the foreign ministers and other Europeans whom he might meet in Washington. Besides this, he made a large collection of pamphlets, documents, and books relating to the history of his country, and to the political questions which had agitated it since the close of the Revolution.

He was, unquestionably, the ablest member of the Federal party in Congress at that time, and he served his party with a zeal and eloquence which was highly useful in keeping the administrations of Jefferson and Madison in the true path. Being myself in the fullest sympathy with Jefferson and Madison, I cannot think so highly of his Congressional career as, perhaps, his son would have us. But I can fully appreciate his honesty, his industry, his high-bred courtesy, and his admirable eloquence. His ardor in debate would have led to frequent challenges and duels, if he had not from the first made up his mind never to be bullied into an acquiescence with so barbarous a custom. In conversation with Southern members on the subject, he would say:

"We do not stand upon equal grounds in this matter. If we fight and you kill me, it is a feather in your cap, and your constituents will think all the better of you for it. If I should kill you, it would ruin me with mine, and they never would send me to Congress again."

Reasoning of this kind, the fire-eaters of 1810 could understand, though they would have been little able to comprehend the lofty moral grounds on which his objections to the practice were really founded.

The most remarkable event of his public life was his opposition to the creation of States, by Act of Congress, out of territory which did not belong to the United States when the Constitution was agreed to. His opinion was, that such new States could only be admitted into the Union by the consent of as many of the original thirteen States as had been necessary for the adoption of the Constitution itself. So rooted and passionate was his conviction on this subject, that, in the year 1811, when the act was discussed under which Louisiana was afterwards admitted, he uttered in the House the following words:

"I am compelled to declare it as my deliberate opinion, that, if this bill passes, the bonds of this Union are virtually dissolved; that the States which compose it are free from their moral obligation; and that, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, to prepare definitely for a separation; amicably if they can, violently if they must."

This looks so much like the secession doctrines of subsequent times, that, I am afraid, many readers will never be able to distinguish the difference. One thing is certain: the admission of new States formed out of new territory, by a mere Act of Congress, did actually, for fifty years, make the Southern States masters of this Union; and, Josiah Quincy was, perhaps, the first public man who clearly saw and clearly foretold that this would be the case.

Mr. Quincy, in one of his letters from Washington, relates an anecdote of Felix Grundy, of Tennessee, which throws light upon Western politics, as they were conducted half a century ago. Mr. Grundy, after having soundly berated Mr. Quincy in the House, said to him the next day:

"Quincy, I thought I had abused you enough; but I find it will not do."

"Why, what is the matter now? I do not mean to speak again."

"No matter," said Grundy; "by Heavens, I must give you another thrashing."

"Why so?" asked the member from Massachusetts.

"Why," said Grundy, "the truth is, a d—d fellow has set up against me in my District—a perfect Jacobin—as much worse than I am as worse can be. Now, except Tim Pickering, there is not a man in the United States so perfectly hated by the people of my District as yourself. You must therefore excuse me. I must abuse you, or I shall never get re-elected. I will do it, however, genteely. I will not do it as that fool of a Clay did—strike so hard as to hurt myself. But abuse you I must. You understand, I mean to be friends notwithstanding. I mean to be in Congress again, and must use the means."

After eight years of Congressional life, when he was but forty-one years of age, and when he might easily have been re-elected, Josiah Quincy withdrew from public life, partly for private and partly for public reasons. The main public reason was, that the Federal party was too powerless even to make a useful opposition; and his chief private reason was, that he loved his wife and children too much to be separated from them. Returning home, he served his native State, first, by making costly experiments in agriculture upon his estate, which, though unprofitable to him, were highly beneficial to the community. For several years he was Mayor of Boston, during which he reformed the city government and rendered services to the city the good effects of which are still apparent. If Boston is the best-governed city in America, it is in part owing to the efficiency and wisdom of Josiah Quincy.

For sixteen years Mr. Quincy was the President of Harvard College—a difficult and laborious office, in which he displayed extraordinary tact, good sense and good nature. His son tells us, that, during the whole sixteen years of his presidency, he was never absent from the six o'clock morning prayers but three times; and that was occasioned by his being obliged to attend a distant court as a witness on behalf of the College. Upon resigning his presidency, though he was then an old man, past seventy, he was still apparently in the very prime of his powers, and he lived many years after in the enjoyment of the most perfect health, and of scarcely diminished vigor. It concerns us all to know the secret of such health and longevity as this. His father died very young, and his mother in middle life. Nor had any of his paternal ancestors lived beyond seventy-four.

In the first place, he was strictly temperate in the use of intoxicating drinks, almost to total abstinence. At breakfast and at night he ate moderately and of plain food. At dinner, which he had the good sense to eat in the middle of the day, he ate heartily of whatever was set before him. He discovered, many years ago, how important perfect cleanliness is to the preservation of health, and he made a frequent use of the bath tub, the flesh brush, and the hair gloves. He was an exceedingly early riser. He was addicted to no vice whatever. His life was blameless and cheerful. He indulged none of the passions which waste the vitality and pervert the character. All his objects were such as a rational and virtuous man could pursue without self reproach, and with the approbation of the wise and good. Thus living, he attained nearly to the age of ninety-three, enjoying life almost to the last hour, and passing away as peacefully and painlessly as a child goes to sleep.

He was an eminently handsome man, from youth to extreme old age. His fine set of teeth he kept entire until his death; and this, no doubt, had much to do with preserving the health of his body and the proportions of his countenance. His son says, that a bust of him taken in his prime, by Horatio Greenough, might well pass for the head of an Apollo or a Jupiter. Of all the myriads of men that have lived and labored on this earth since its creation, I question if there has ever been one who lived, upon the whole, a better life than Josiah Quincy, of Massachusetts. He had a sound constitution, and took care of it; he had a good mind, and improved it; he had an excellent wife, and appreciated her value; he had a good fortune, and did not abuse it; he lived in a good country, and faithfully served it; he had an enlightened religion, and lived up to it.

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COSTLY JEWELS—DIAMONDS.

BY MRS. FAIRFIELD.

The actual paragon-diamonds of the world, viz., stones of over one hundred carats weight, (cut and uncut) are but ten—possibly eleven in number.

Two of these still remain in the rough. One is the celebrated "*Nizam*" of India, weight two hundred and forty carats, which is (very appropriately) owned by the King of Golconda, since none other could probably afford its (uncut) possession. The second, simply known as "*The Great Rough Diamond*," as described by the travelled Tuvernier, is of two hundred and eighty two and a half carats weight. The largest diamond—claimed to have been the largest diamond *ever* found—is in the possession of the present King of Portugal. It's size is fully that of a hen's egg. It boasts the incredible weight of *one thousand six hundred and eighty carats* (over eleven ounces.) This eighth diamond-wonder is however shrewdly suspected by the most renowned jewellers and mineralogists in Europe to be but a bit of superb white topaz instead. At present, however, it claims place as "*The Diamond Marvel of the Age.*" The remaining gems are the eight historic diamonds of the world. A duplicate number, however, from their history and beauty—although each within the specified one hundred carats weight—claim equal rank with the "World's Wonder-Waters;" making sixteen in all, they rank as follows:

"The Rajah" (belonging to the King of Borneo)	367	carats
"The Grand Mogul" (owned by Russia)	367	"
"The White Brilliant, No. 1"	242⅝	"
"The Orlow"	195	"
"The Austrian"	139½	"
"The Great South Star" (or "Halpen")	138⅜	"
"The Regent" (or Pitt)	136⅞	"
"The Koh-i-noor" (originally the largest diamond ever found)	123½	"

The remaining eight are:

"The Shah" (formerly belonging to Persia)	93	carats
"The Nassak"	89¾	"
"The Piggot"	82¼	"
"The Brazilian"	72	"
"The Hope" (Blue)	67⅛	"
"The Saucy"	53½	"
"The Holland"	36	"
"The Dresden" (Green)	31¼	"

Be it remembered, that in the operation of cutting, diamonds invariably lose from one-half to three-quarters of their weights, as the following statement will illustrate: When found, "The Regent" (or Pitt) weighed in the rough 410 carats. When cut, but 136⅞. It is said to have required ten years' labor in the operation of cutting. "The Grand Mogul," 780½; cut, 267 carats. "The Koh-i-noor," rough, 827 2-16; cut, 186⅙ carats. "The South Star," 254½; cut, 138⅜. "The Nassak" (once cut), 89¾; now, 78⅝.

The origin of the term carat is probably unfamiliar to many readers. The term is derived from the word *kuara* (the coral tree), the red pods of which, when sun-dried, were formerly used in weighing down the scale to equal gold dust. Each of these pods weighed four grains, which weight is called and considered that of one carat.

The crowns of Russia are said to be the most magnificent in the world, both for beauty, for diamonds, and value. That of Ivan Alexiowitch contained 881. Peter the Great's diadem 847. That of his wife 2,536. The present Emperor has, also, purchased an immense number of additional brilliants with which to embellish his own.

The crown of France owns many others—the total value of the crown-jewels of which nation is 29,066,488 francs. The Pacha of Egypt also owns many invaluable diamonds, as does also the Sultan of Turkey. The Queen of England, of course, owns the world-renowned Koh-i-noor, presented to her by the East India Company on the late settlement of Runjeet Sing's estate. A wonderful diamond, weighing 25 carats, was some twelve years since discovered in Virginia, and exhibited by one of our first jewelers in the city. Since then other diamonds of less value have been discovered in various parts of the United States. The matter of pearl-hunting in America, however, still remains in hopeless *statu quo*.

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Epigram.—From the German.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

Close-fist!—Prithee, understand,
No one will thy wants relieve;
Hand is only washed by hand,
He must give, who would receive!

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AN OLD-FASHIONED SUNDAY, AT LAST.

I am New England born. I want a hymn, and a prayer, on Sunday. Not that I do not like both, on other days; but I am always homesick without them on Sunday. I want them *in church*, too. I said I wanted a hymn and a prayer. I want a sermon, too; but alas! I am so often disappointed *there*, and I so dread being disappointed, that I generally take a seat near the door, where I can leave at the precise point when I feel happy, and the sermon begins.

This is naughty, I know, but as I have gone into the confessional, I will make a clean "*shrive*" of it. I want *what* I want so much, and the lack of it spoils my Sunday. I want to know *how to live*; and the Rev. —— only tells me that I've "got to die." I want to know how to manage with *to-day*; and the Rev. —— only speculates about what may or what may not be in eternity. I want to be soothed, and helped, and propped, and comforted; and the Rev. —— tries to scare me with an "angry God," and a "sure damnation." I want earnestness, in the pulpit; and instead, I find the Rev. —— drawling lazily: "And the Lud Ged said unto Adam." I want to know what the Rev —— is talking about; instead—half of the time, I am convinced—he don't even know that himself.

Perhaps these reasons may be some excuse for my dodging the "sermon" occasionally; if not, I plead guilty, and only ask you to acquit me of intentional irreverence. It still remains that who else soever can do without their Sunday, it is not I—Fanny.

But that's not what I meant to speak about, only that you will insist on the "prelude" in church. I *meant* to tell you that the Sunday before I left New York, I had a genuine Sunday—one of *my* Sundays: when, on entering the church of the Rev. Dr. Hall, I did not exchange the sweet song of birds, the vivid green of the trees, or the blue of the fair skies, for sulphureous terrors. Since I heard Dr. Payson, of Portland, when he reached out pleading hands to win wayward feet into the path of life, I have never been so entirely satisfied with the delivery of The Master's message. Dr. Hall has the same dignity; the same pleading earnestness; the same deep, rich voice; the same appreciative way of reading the hymns; the same *heart*-tone in every syllable. With him it is no performance. No person present could fail to feel that he had come there that morning as a fond parent would go forth, full of tender love, and yearning for the child who had strayed from home. There was no narrowness, no bigotry, no uncharitable denunciation; and, at the same time, no blinking of the truth—and the *whole* truth. It was the lovely spirit of The Crucified: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

I had a full meal; and if you could have gone away unsatisfied, I am sorry for you. It must be that you never had a heart-wrench; that you never reached out imploring hands in the darkness, only to grasp the empty air. It must be that the earth never opened at your feet, and swallowed up your dear ones. It must be that you never—with a sincere desire to do right, by yourself, and by others—found yourself choking with distressful tears, that each day's sun should go down with so poor a record. Oh, you never could have felt thus, or you could not have gone away from the sound of Dr. Hall's voice, and said, there was nothing there for me. At least I think you would have admired, as I did, his noble frankness in telling "church members" that he did not blame outsiders for doubting their Christianity, when they were so swift to pronounce judgment on those who differed from them in opinion. "This is bigotry," said he; "this is fanaticism—it is not Christianity. Man's conscience was not given him for this—it was given him to scrutinize his own short-comings." This pleased me, in contrast with the opinion held by many "Christians," that the faults of such should never be spoken of, "for the possible harm to the cause."

Now, in conclusion, I would say to Dr. Hall's church, that to allow a clergyman like him to preach in a place so badly ventilated as was that church the morning I was present, is a crime. Let them show their regard for him, while thronging there to hear him, by not killing him by inches; he is too tall a man to die in that way.

Fanny Fern.

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—It is proper to state that the Rev. J. N. McLeod, D. D., spoke in favor of Mr. Stuart's suspension, both before and after the vote was taken, but when the roll was called to record the ayes and noes, refused to state his vote until all the other votes had been given, when he announced his in the negative. It is for himself to explain his inconsistency, as those with whom he so strangely associated himself by this vote were as much surprised as those whom he so strangely deserted. Mr. Stuart's friends cannot regard him as one of their number.—*Presbyterian.*

How is this? Can Dr. McLeod afford to remain silent under such an imputation? We think not. We were introduced to him over a quarter of a century ago, and have always supposed him to be a good man, although we knew he was wedded to the past, and somewhat "old-fogyish" in his ideas. We cannot believe that he is guilty of such glaring inconsistency as is imputed to him by the *Presbyterian*. The Doctor owes it not only to himself but to his friends to set himself right—if he can—in this matter.

◆

Let Tax-Payers Beware!

As things are going on, a man will have to be worth a large fortune to be able to own any real-estate in the city of New York. The taxes are running up with a rapidity which is frightful. The people are robbed on every hand. Is the upshot of the matter to be a revolution and the hanging of the plunderers and their abettors to the city lamp-posts?

◆

[From the Presbyterian.]

Sudden Death of a Minister in the Pulpit.

We were recently called to visit the quiet and beautiful village of Westfield, New Jersey. Nature was rejoicing in all the loveliness of early June; and yet our errand was of a somewhat mournful nature. Hastily were we summoned to attend the burial of a ministerial friend and brother, the Rev. Edwin Downer. His death took place under circumstances at once startling and impressive. It occurred in the pulpit of the Presbyterian church of that place, at the opening of divine service, on the morning of Sabbath, May 31. In the absence of the pastor, the Rev. E. B. Edgar, at the General Assembly, Mr. Downer had consented to supply the pulpit on that day. Entering the church in his usual health, he opened the service with a brief but appropriate invocation, closing somewhat abruptly with the words "for Jesus' sake. Amen," and resumed his seat in the pulpit chair. By the falling of his hand loosely at his side, it was at once observed he was ill. He never spake again.

LITTLE THINGS.

BY ALICE CARY.

Shall we strike a bargain, Fate?
And wilt thou to this agree?
Take whatever things are great,
Leave the little things to me!

Take the eagle, proud and dark,
Broad of shoulders, strong of wing;
Leave the robin, leave the lark,
'Tis the little birds that sing!

Take the oak-wood, towering up,
With its top against the skies;
Leave one little acorn cup,
Therein all the forest lies!

Take the murmurous fountain-heads,
Take the river, winding slow,
But about my garden-beds
Leave the dew-drop, small and low.

Winding waves are fine to view,
Sweet the fountain's silver call;
But the little drop of dew
Holds the sunshine, after all.

Take the sea, the great, wide sea,
White with many a swelling sail;
Leave the little stream to me,
Sliding silent through the vale.

Poesy will find her theme
In thy grander portion, still,
'Tis my little, unpraised stream
Of the meadow, turns the mill.

Take the palace, all ashine,
With its lofty halls and towers;
Let the little house be mine,
With its door-yard grass and flowers.

Take the lands, the royal lands,
All with parks and orchards bright;
Leave to me the little hands,
Clinging closely morn and night.

Ah, for once be kindly, Fate,
To my harmless plan agree;
Take whatever things are great,
Leave the little things to me!

* * *

THE ATTORNEY'S PLOT;

OR,

The Secrets of the Marquis and the Baronet.

By PROF. WM. HENRY PECK.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HUNTSMAN OF THE MARQUIS.

We have now followed, as we promised we would, the fortunes of Evaline Ulster from the moment she entered, or rather was imprisoned, in the turret-chamber, up to the moment when Major Hark Varly left the hall of Ulster Manor.

Nearly all of that time, over two hours, had been consumed by Evaline in recalling memories connected with her father, and the place in which she found herself imprisoned after an absence of ten years; and, as related in the last chapter, she had barely begun to make use of those recollections when she was interrupted by what seemed to her, and may seem to the reader, the miraculous appearance of Captain Hugh De Lisle.

But before explaining this unexpected appearance of that gentleman, it is necessary that we should return to the study of Sir Alvick Ulster, where we left the young officer very impatiently reconciling himself to continue concealed for a time longer, as he saw plainly that the baronet desired the immediate presence of some one.

That one, as the reader has learned, was Lady Matilda.

Sir Alvick, on parting with Major Varly, had struck his entry-bell four sharp blows, a signal well understood by Clement to mean that Sir Alvick imperatively demanded the immediate presence of Lady Matilda.

Lady Matilda, though summoned, did not appear instantly, and Sir Alvick again struck the entry-bell.

This time he struck it but once, and very softly, so softly that its note was not heard by Clement. It was heard, however, and very distinctly, by John Roffton, who was at the foot of the stairs leading up to the floor upon which the baronet's study was situated.

John Roffton responded to the signal of the baronet instantly, who said to him, after carefully closing the door:

"Did you see the person who came in as you left the room with Mr. Wharle?"

"Major Hark Varly, sir?"

"So you know him?"

"By sight, sir. Saw him when I was with my lady in London."

"You know where to find Ross Chaffton, no doubt. I have heard that you and he used to ride together. But you are an honest man now, and that is fortunate for Major Hark Varly, who has a purse of gold with him. It is a dark night for a ride from the Manor to Ulsterborough. As you and Ross Chaffton were once friends, and I take much interest in Major Varly, if you think you could get immediate word to the highwayman, he might not molest the major on his way to Ulsterborough."

"Ross Chaffton, sir, used, in his young days, to ride a great deal in this county and neighborhood, Sir Alvick," replied Roffton, gruffly, and hanging down his head, while his deep-set eyes glanced askance at his master. "I ha' no doubt John Roffton could find him in half an hour."

"Half an hour! By that time he may have not only waylaid the major, but even have knocked him on the head," said the baronet. "Rascal, I have stood between you and the gallows for these twelve months and more. This Ross Chaffton is not far from the Manor, for some of the servants said yesterday they saw him lurking about the Park. Perhaps you and he have been planning a burglary against the Manor."

"No, Sir Alvick. I swear I am faithful to you. Ross Chaffton is in the vicinity, but not for burglary. Does your honor know who he is?"

"He is a highwayman. That is all I know of him, and I know that only from report."

"Your honor has heard of—I mean, may have heard of a lady—she was a cousin of the late Marquis of Galmount—her name was Aspa Jarles."

"Aspa Jarles!" exclaimed the startled baronet, amazed at hearing this name—a name which had been flying about his ears for hours, after having been dead to him nearly quarter of a century. "What of her? What has Ross Chaffton to do with her?—but in the meantime, while you are stupidly gossipping Ross Chaffton may harm the major——"

"No danger of that, Sir Alvick. Ross Chaffton and Major Hark Varly are not simply acquaintances—they are friends."

"Friends!"

"Yes, sir, as much as gamblers ever are to each other. I used to see them together in London, and the major's influence protected Chaffton from arrest. I was about to tell you, sir, that Ross Chaffton is the man with whom Miss Aspa Jarles eloped some twenty-four years ago."

"Ah," said Sir Alvick, again startled. "I remember that she fell in love with a fellow from London and disappeared with him. So this highwayman is that man."

"The same—and a very deep fellow too. A friend, in some sort, of Mr. Hassan Wharle, they say."

"Good heaven!" thought the baronet. "And I was about to put a dark piece of business into the hands of a man who has been a friend of Aspa Jarles, and may be yet—and who is the friend of Hark Varly and Hassan Wharle."

John Roffton eyed the amazed and bewildered baronet very keenly, and apparently having made up his mind to a fixed course of action, advanced and said:

"Sir Alvick, you have been my friend when others deserted me. You saved my life, and I swore then that if ever I had a chance to serve you I would do it. You saw me stare and perhaps change color when I saw Mr. Hassan Wharle here to-night."

"I noticed it particularly," replied Sir Alvick. "You said you did not know him."

"I lied, Sir Alvick," said Roffton, bluntly. "That man and his grandfather, old Amos Jarles——"

"What! He is the grandson of the father of Aspa Jarles!" interrupted Sir Alvick, and shuddering too, for here seemed corroboration of Hassan Wharle's claims.

"Yes, Sir Alvick. He and his grandfather tried to have me hanged because I would not keep secret—or because they suspected that I would not keep secret what I suspected—your honor remembers? About Captain Hugh De Lisle?"

"Yes, that you had reason to believe him to be a son, legitimate or illegitimate, of Lord Hayward," replied the baronet.

"At any rate," resumed Roffton, "they resolved to have me out of the way——"

"Out of the way of what?"

"Heaven knows, and no doubt the devil also," replied Roffton, "for I do not. Some deep plot they had in view, or, mayhap, already afoot. They managed to have me arrested for certain mischiefs I had done years before—had me convicted, and would have had me hanged only for you."

SIR ALVICK'S PROPOSITION.

"Yes, I pledged you my intercession with the Queen, in return for certain information which you said you could give about the heir of Lord Hayward. I thought you knew something about Lord Peter, who is his heir and son, and so gained your pardon from Queen Anne. Your information did not amount to much—only that you suspected Hugh De Lisle to be a son of Lord Hayward—a baseless suspicion founded upon idle gossip. But I did not cease to be your friend, notwithstanding the emptiness of your information."

"It was not so empty," thought John Roffton, "but that it made you pursue Captain Hugh De Lisle until you had him shot."

"But go on, Roffton, and explain what you meant by saying that you have sworn to serve me if ever a chance comes up."

"I mean that I lied when I said that I did not know Hassan Wharle, Sir Alvick. But when I said that, I did not know that he was your enemy."

"And how do you know that Mr. Hassan Wharle is my enemy now?"

"If he is not your enemy, Sir Alvick, or rather if you do not know him to be your enemy," replied Roffton, gravely, "it is time that you knew it. I hear some one coming, and must say no more. But you need not send me to warn Ross Chaffton not to molest Hark Varly, Sir Alvick. Be my friend, and I will be yours. I do not know what plot they have afoot—I mean Ross Chaffton, Hark Varly, Hassan Wharle, Aspa Jarles, and others, but I intend to work against it—provided, Sir Alvick, you will be my friend in the matter, for I hate every man of them—and every woman of them too," added John Roffton to himself.

Sir Alvick was greatly pleased by this voluntary, and, as he imagined, hearty offer of Roffton's services. He needed a daring, desperate and unscrupulous ally then, if ever he had needed one in all his life.

John Roffton and he had become acquainted little over a year before we introduced them to our *Ledger* readers, and in a manner somewhat strange, as follows:

Sir Alvick Ulster, then one of Marlborough's generals, being in London on business connected with the army, was preparing for a speedy return to the Continent when a message was brought to him, stating that a man under sentence of death in Newgate prison desired to see him upon an affair that concerned the honor of his family.

Sir Alvick, ever suspicious, as men are who have led dark and conspiring lives, hastened to the cell of this condemned man, and was surprised to recognize in the fettered prisoner a man who had often held the stirrup of the murdered marquis years before—in fact, John Roffton, who had been a huntsman of the wealthy nobleman.

The sudden confronting of this man, whom he had not seen for years, and the fact that he had been so intimately associated with a man whose blood was upon his hands, so startled the guilty baronet that he trembled like a detected felon when John Roffton, raising himself from his bed of straw, said:

"Sir Alvick, I have sent for you to speak of something that happened years ago in the Tangle of Osborn Park. But I will not speak a word of it—not to you, though I may to others—so long as the sentence of death hangs over my head."

Having said this John Roffton threw himself upon his face in his bed of straw, and refused to notice the baronet any more.

Terribly startled by the ominous words of the condemned felon, Sir Alvick, who knew his great influence with Queen Anne, because she remembered the love of her dead son, Prince Eustache, had borne for him, hastened to procure a private audience with Her Majesty, to ask that John Roffton, convicted of robbery and other high misdemeanors, might be pardoned.

Queen Anne, who respected the warlike baronet less for his greatness than for the memory of her dead son, granted his urgent request, which he pressed in these words:

"John Roffton, I firmly believe, is innocent of every charge under which he is condemned. He is a former servitor of my dearly-beloved friend, the unfortunate Marquis of Galmount, and I fervently pray your majesty to exercise the royal perogative of full and complete pardon in his favor. I will, in my own person be responsible for his future good conduct."

Nothing less than the terror of guilt had led stern Sir Alvick to urge this request upon the good-natured Queen. He knew very well that, as John Roffton was a condemned felon, nothing that he could say would be admitted as evidence against Sir Alvick Ulster; yet he knew very well that the reputation he had gained was hollow and worm-eaten—a crevice once made in the bulwark of his fame, no matter how small, or whether made by the hand of a duke or the finger of a felon, a tide of overwhelming destruction would soon rush in.

He silently compared his greatness and security to that of the inhabitants of Holland, who keep out the devouring waves of the sea with walls of dirt, which an insect may pierce, and, unless timely stoppage be made, admit a jet which shall increase rapidly into a fierce, resistless torrent of death and ruin.

He obtained the pardon of John Roffton, though he wrongly believed that he was a wicked wretch, justly condemned to infamous death, and received the pardoned man into his own household.

John Roffton, in return for this kindness,—though John Roffton was shrewd enough to know that terror of guilt, and not kindness of heart, had actuated the baronet—told him something.

This something, Roffton had said, was all he knew, and he really knew nothing, he said, only suspected, nor did it have anything to do with the death of the marquis.

John Roffton, free and pardoned—no longer in Newgate prison—fell back upon the great dream of his life. What that great dream was remains to be told. He had his hopes, his hates, his ambitions as well as Sir Alvick. They had very nearly been cut short by a hempen cord; but they had not been; and, with a pardoned life, the late felon sternly resolved to make the great dream of his life true.

So when the baronet pressed him for a full explanation of those startling and mysterious words:

"Sir Alvick, I have sent for you to speak of something that happened years ago in the Tangle of Osborn Park. But I will not speak a word of it—not to you, though I may to others—so long as the sentence of death hangs over my head."

John Roffton had made up something to say which should deceive the baronet into the very belief upon which the latter had fallen, viz. that John Roffton, like a drowning man, had clutched at a straw.

But Sir Alvick, needing a person near him, bound to him by a rescued life, and such a person as he imagined John Roffton to be, had accepted gladly the vague explanation of the startling words, and made him a member of his household, left him in England with Lady Matilda, while he returned to the army of the great duke to look after Hugh De Lisle, to be appalled by his extraordinary resemblance to the murdered marquis and also to Aspa Jarles—another dread spectre of his fears—to plot and succeed in his desire to remove from earth, as he supposed, this breathing reproach and accusation.

The news of the execution of Hugh De Lisle had reached John Roffton in England, long before the return of the baronet to Ulster Manor; had come upon him like a thunderbolt, for he had no dislike for Hugh De Lisle. He had served under him, year after year, until the deep machinations of sundry persons who have figured and of others who are to figure in this history, suddenly hurled him into Newgate prison.

John Roffton, whatever his defects may have been, never intended that what he said to Sir Alvick Ulster should injure Captain Hugh De Lisle, and the tidings of his execution, or rather of his supposed and reported execution astounded him. For days and weeks afterward, he remained more silent and crabbed than ever the servitors of the manor had declared him to be, and by nature he was a silent and surly man.

He suspected, but could not declare that Sir Alvick Ulster had deliberately plotted the death of Hugh De Lisle. He recalled the story he had told the baronet, again and again. There did not appear to be anything in that story, which he had "made up off hand," as he expressed it, which could have influenced Sir Alvick to persecute Hugh De Lisle.

"Besides," thought John Roffton, "the baronet made light of my story, as I hoped he would."

But shortly before the return of Sir Alvick, a member of Hugh De Lisle's company, an old comrade of Roffton had strolled to Ulster Manor and told him how all the company of their beloved Captain De Lisle knew that Sir Alvick had done all he could to force condemnation upon Captain Hugh, and how that Captain Hugh had escaped and was wandering in France.

Then returned to surly and silent John Roffton, the former dream of his life, and what that dream was we have yet to relate.

He was waiting and watching patiently, ever on the lookout for the sudden appearance of his late captain, for he knew him well, had known him from his youth, and knew that he would not remain an outlawed fugitive and exile in France, and leave Sir Alvick in peace and triumph in England.

"You hate every man of them," said the baronet, "and you think they have some plot afoot against me. Roffton,—but here comes Lady Matilda. Stay! Remain in my study until I return. I wish to speak with Lady Matilda——"

"I am here, Sir Alvick," said Lady Matilda, who entered at that moment. "Why was I sent for in such haste. I was speaking with Lord Peter, who has concluded to remain in the Manor to-night, when Clement came in and whispered that you wished to see me at once——"

"You did not come at once," interrupted the baronet, testily. "Remain where you are, Roffton, until I return. Come, Lady Matilda, I will go with you to the library. Haste, my lady; I have no time to lose. I wonder if Major Varly has yet left——"

"Major who?" exclaimed Lady Matilda, while her fair cheek flushed deeply.

"Hark Varly. Come," replied the baronet, who did not perceive her emotion on hearing that name.

"He has changed his mind and will not send me to warn Ross Chaffton not to molest the major," thought John Roffton, with a surly grin, when left alone in the study. "He felt my pulse right closely, and I know what he wanted. He wanted me or Ross Chaffton, no matter who, to cut the throat of Major Varly, and indeed I was about to do so to escape from the Manor and that rascally Hassan Wharle, and go seek for Captain Hugh."

"Sturley," said a voice within the room, and John Roffton turned instantly towards the direction whence the voice came.

He saw nothing except the armor-clad effigy, and he stared at the empty visor of that with evident signs of dismay upon his visage.

Sir Alvick had closed the door as he withdrew so hastily with Lady Matilda, so that John Roffton found himself shut up in the study with a mysterious voice.

In addition to this fact, sufficiently startling in itself, the voice had called him by a name he no longer bore. He had been condemned to be hanged under that name, and upon being pardoned had cast it aside and adopted that of Roffton.

He stared at the effigy in stolid amazement for a moment, and was then about to retreat from the study in headlong haste, despite the repeated commands of Sir Alvick, when the same voice said again:

"Corporal Sturley!"

Now John Roffton was sure he had heard aright. Before, he had imagined his ears had deceived him. But there was no mistake this time. There was a voice in the room, and it came from the effigy.

A trembling seized upon the massive knees of John Roffton, and with a snort of terror he bounded at the door. In his haste he ran against the baronet's chair, and fell headlong upon the floor.

Before he could more than scramble to his knees, and before he had summoned courage to cast another look at the effigy, which he imagined haunted by a spirit, a strong grasp was laid upon his shoulder.

"Oh, Lord, deliver me!" faintly ejaculated the now mortally terrified man.

"Sturley, get up, you coward," said the voice, as the owner of the hand shook him violently.

John Roffton scrambled to his feet instantly, slowly and affrightedly turned his head, expecting to see the effigy at his side, and recognized Hugh De Lisle, first with a stare of wonder and then with a stifled roar of delight.

"Silence," said Hugh De Lisle, in a deep, fierce tone. "I wish to gain instant and secret access to the turret-chamber—the room above this."

"Captain, my life is at your service. Sir Alvick——"

"I know that he will be back in a moment," said Hugh De Lisle, interrupting him. "How can I reach the turret-chamber?"

"Come," replied Roffton, opening the door and listening. "The stairs that lead up to it are not far off. Tread lightly, Captain Hugh."

It was no part of John Roffton's business to inquire of his late commander why he desired so earnestly to reach the turret-chamber, though he supposed it was because he wished to be concealed.

He moved rapidly along the corridor, followed by Hugh De Lisle until he halted at a door, tried it and groaned.

"It is locked, and we have not time to force the lock. Besides Sir Alvick may return at any moment. This door is at the foot of the turret-stairs. But come on, Captain. I will lead you to a ladder by which you can reach the roof, and perhaps you may then climb up the turret to one of the windows. They are grated, but you may be able to force in the grating."

Guided by Roffton, Hugh De Lisle was soon upon the roof, and having seen him there the former hurried back into the baronet's study to await the return of Sir Alvick.

Hugh De Lisle, after reaching the roof, found it a difficult task to make his way along its slippery and slanting surface to where the turret rose steep and lofty.

The rain was descending in torrents, the wind was very violent, and the pitchy darkness of the night was broken only at intervals by fitful flashes of blinding lightning.

Hugh De Lisle was active, strong, resolute and daring. We said of him in the opening chapters of this story that the manner and success with which he raised the baronet's window, proved great skill in effecting burglarious entrances, but we did not say all—that this skill was derived, not from the stealthy habits of a thief and a burglar, but from many a midnight expedition, in all of which he had won great fame, planned to surprise or capture sleeping or vigilant enemies of the English army.

His life had been one of hair-breadth escapes, forlorn hopes, imminent peril, and desperate enterprises, in which his stout heart and body, active mind and limbs, had ever carried him through unharmed and triumphant, where less daring and weaker men would have been slain or defeated.

The dangers of his position and the hardiness of his present enterprise, therefore, did not appal him, nor in the least shake the purpose he had formed; and that purpose was to see, and if possible, speak to Evaline Ulster.

"I may not be able to effect her speedy release," he thought, as he struggled towards the turret, "Yet I may be able to let her know that I am still alive, near her, and determined to rescue her."

He had gathered from the conversations which he had overheard in his concealment, that Lord Peter was in the manor at that moment—Lord Peter, to whom Evaline's unscrupulous guardians desired to wed her, and he feared that Sir Alvick and Lady Matilda, alarmed by the sudden growth of opposition springing up around them, might resolve to make sure of one thing—the immediate marriage of Evaline Ulster to Lord Peter Fitz-Osborn.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PRISONER IN ULSTER KEEP.

The rich and powerful of the times of which we write, seldom hesitated to force refractory daughters and wards into distasteful marriages, without heeding prayers and supplications. Of this Hugh De Lisle was well aware, and knowing now the daring of Lady Matilda and the brutality of Sir Alvick, he had conceived a belief that they might, as Lord Peter was in the manor, make it impossible for Hassan Wharle, or Hugh De Lisle, or any other person, to wed their helpless though rebellious ward.

Fired by this fear and conviction, he had resolved to defer the completion of his interrupted interview with Sir Alvick, and at every hazard inform Evaline of his near presence.

He fought his way slowly along the edge of the slippery roof, through darkness and storm, until he reached the base of the turret where it rose steep from the roof.

A hasty examination by the sense of touch assured him that he could climb the turret, as it was built of beams, one placed upon another, but with sufficient interstices between them to give a daring and agile climber room to use his hands and feet in an ascent.

A flash of lightning showed him that he was immediately beneath one of the long and narrow windows which we have described, and murmuring a hasty prayer to Heaven for aid and success, he began to ascend.

His progress was both dangerous and difficult, for the violence of the storm sometimes nearly dragged him from the beams and hurled him off into space. He persevered, and at length was able to obtain a safe footing near the window, and to grasp the heavy iron grating.

The width of the window was barely wide enough to admit the passage of a man's body, without glass or sash, and only the iron bars between him and the maiden he believed to be within.

He listened intently, and quick of ear, despite the roar of the gale, heard the stifled cry of joy with which Evaline hailed the discovery and possession of her father's MS.

"She is there," he thought, "and no doubt alone. Let me try the bars as noiselessly as possible."

He did so, and with what alarm and terror to the amazed Evaline we have seen. The bars were rusty, corroded, and weak in the grasp of so powerful a man as Hugh De Lisle. They bent and snapped under his grasp, and with great care lest any of them should fall within the room, and so alarm by their fall and clatter any one in the baronet's study, he at length forced them aside, and slowly thrust in his head to see the wide-distended and beautiful eyes of Evaline Ulster gazing into his own.

As she recognized him she sank back, almost fainting with amazement, pressing her hands upon her bosom and murmuring.

"Thank God, he is alive!"

"Fair lady!" said Hugh De Lisle, in a guarded tone. "Dear lady!"

And these were the first words ever spoken by Hugh De Lisle to Evaline Ulster. She had never until that moment heard the sound of his voice, but its deep, rich tones penetrated to her heart, as the burning glance of his handsome eyes had pierced to her soul when he rode beneath the Queen's balcony twelve months before.

She sprang to her feet, and raised her eyes again to his, a smile of joy and love ineffable brightening her lovely face.

"Dear lady," said Hugh De Lisle, "I have heard all that you said in the baronet's study."

"Ah, sir," exclaimed Evaline, blushing deeply, for she remembered how emphatically she had declared that she loved him, and him alone, and how she would never wed any man but Captain Hugh De Lisle. "I did not know—I would not—I was——"

But here her maiden confusion made her speech inarticulate, and she covered her face with her hands, for her cheeks seemed to her as in a blaze of fire.

The man whom she loved had heard her declare her love for him, when perhaps he had no love for her. She felt as if she were about to sink with shame, and was about to give way to tears when Hugh De Lisle said:

"Dear lady, man never loved woman more devotedly than I do you; and I have loved you, dear lady, from the instant that our eyes met, more than a year ago. To die knowing that you loved me would be a pleasure. To live without your love, dear lady, would be a torment."

She knew he spoke as he felt, and no longer ashamed of her avowal, she again raised her eyes to his, and smiled proudly, fondly upon him, though the blush of maiden modesty still flushed cheek, neck and brow.

"Sir—" she began, scarcely knowing what to say, yet feeling that she should say something. But the clash of the bolt of the locked door checked her.

She uttered a sharp cry of terror, thinking she was surprised in conversation with her lover, and forgetting that she had made entrance impossible by having placed the great oaken bar across the door—a mode of fastening always used by poor Sir Malcom when he wished to keep out the hateful Alvick Ulster, and his no less detested Lady Matilda.

She saw instantly that she was safe from intrusion, though whoever was without began to strike against the door violently.

"The broken grating!" cried Evaline, in a guarded tone, yet anxiously, as she pointed at the latticed iron work, suspended from the window by a single bent bar. "It will be noticed."

Hugh De Lisle, with admirable presence of mind, replied:

"Say that the thunder shook it loose. I will remain concealed."

He disappeared from the window as he spoke, leaving the broken grating hanging within the room.

"Unbar the door!" commanded the harsh voice of the baronet.

"Yes, or we will have it battered down!" cried a sharper voice, which Evaline recognized as Lady Matilda's.

"I will be in no hurry to admit you," thought Evaline. "Certainly, I have no desire for your company."

"Will you unbar the door?" again demanded the baronet—enforcing his words by beating upon the door with the heavy key of the massive lock.

The door was hung to open outwards, but Sir Malcom had screwed upon it two stout brackets of iron, through which the stout oaken bar was passed; and as the ends of this bar reached beyond the door frame several inches, it was impossible for any one to force an entrance without tearing the door from the brackets, or by beating and cutting it down.

To force an entrance would require at least half an hour's hard work, even with axes.

"I pray you, Miss Evaline, admit us. We come as friends, to restore you to freedom," said a third voice—a very rich and tuneful voice, too, but not having that depth of volume and sincerity so remarkable in the voice of Hugh De Lisle.

Evaline started as she heard this voice, and mentally exclaimed:

"Ah, that is Lord Peter! Now, what can he wish? Why is he there?"

"Who is there?" whispered Hugh De Lisle, reappearing at the window, which was immediately opposite to the door.

"Sir Alvick, Lady Matilda, and Lord Peter," replied Evaline.

And as her back was towards the door, had she spoken much louder, those without would not have heard her voice.

"Ah, I fear they have come to force you into an immediate marriage," thought De Lisle, as his eyes flashed with a suddenly conceived and daring resolution.

"Evaline Ulster," again exclaimed the baronet, "I command you to take down the bar this instant, under pain of my severe displeasure."

And here it may be well to explain the presence of Sir Alvick, Lady Matilda and Lord Peter, before the door of the turret-chamber.

When Sir Alvick and Lady Matilda hurried from the baronet's study, they directed their steps towards the library, Lady Matilda impatiently demanding why he was so agitated, and he maintaining an obstinate silence, until he halted before the library door, when he asked:

"Lord Peter is within?"

"He is, and very anxious to see you."

"Very well. I will be with you and him in a moment," replied the baronet, hurrying away.

Lady Matilda, surprised at the ghastly pallor of his face and the fierceness of his eyes, opened the door, and entered the library—where sat her son, Lord Peter.

Sir Alvick, after leaving Lady Matilda at the door of the library, hurried through the hall to a remote part of the house, passed out into the rear court-yard, crossed it rapidly, until he halted before a small stone house called Ulster-Keep.

This square edifice of stone was often used for the temporary confinement of accused persons, until Sir Alvick as chief magistrate of the county, or in his absence some deputy official, made out their transfer and committal to the county jail in Ulsterborough.

The reader will remember that in Chapter IX. of our story, Sir Alvick, in beginning his interview with Major Varly, used these words:

"One arrested for murder, to-day, is now in confinement in Ulster-Keep——"

The person to whom the baronet referred had been arrested at a late hour on that day, and, preparatory to an examination upon a charge of murder, was confined in the Keep.

There should have been a guard at the door of the Keep, and Sir Alvick expected to find one there. The violence of the storm, no doubt, had made the sentinel leave his post for better quarters; and, rejoiced to find him gone, Sir Alvick opened the door with a duplicate key and entered the narrow dungeon, closing the door after him.

The prisoner—a dark-faced, fierce-eyed man—started up from his bed of straw, as the door of his cell was opened, and glared in surprise at Sir Alvick.

The baronet's face and form were enveloped in a long Spanish cloak, which he had snatched up as he passed through the library hall; and the dim light burning in the cell aided the prisoner but little in his scrutiny of the muffled personage who had so suddenly become his companion.

The baronet, keeping his face carefully concealed, and standing in the shadow made by a projecting angle of the cell, said in a disguised voice, low and indistinct, as he spoke with a fold of the cloak over his mouth:

"Olin Cline, what will you give for liberty?"

"What have I to give?" replied the man, in a surly tone. "Poverty placed me here."

"Then what will you do to be set free?"

"Do anything. But why should I, since I would be run down and arrested again?"

"There are no proofs against you, Cline, except circumstantial evidence."

"And are they not damning?" asked the prisoner, in a desponding tone. "Has not Sir Alvick Ulster in his possession the knife stained with blood, the knife found near the murdered peddler—the knife with my name—with Olin Cline cut upon its handle? Curse the idle hour when I carved my name there! Has he not also my shoes, dabbled with blood? They found them hidden beneath the thatch of my hovel. Was not Sir Alvick near the spot where the peddler was struck down? The man that struck the peddler saw the accursed baronet soon after the deed was done. I do not say that I did it—not I. Yet it was Sir Alvick who had me arrested. I tell you, whoever you are, there is but one man in all England who can save me from the gallows, and that man would see me hanged every day for a thousand years before he would lift his little finger in my behalf."

"And who is that man?"

"Who? Why, the black baronet himself; Sir Alvick Ulster, who will be my chief accuser. My committal to Ulsterborough jail would have been made out before sundown, only that Sir Alvick wished to appear as witness against me, and so put off the examination until to-morrow, when some other magistrate will be here. He has a spite against me, because, some twenty-three years ago, I said that if the Tangle could tell tales, it would say that Lord Hayward was no suicide. He has hated me and persecuted me ever since, and made me what I am."

"And what are you?"

"What am I!" exclaimed Cline, fiercely; "I am a desperate man, a suspected man, a detested man, a dog with a bad name."

"And a murderer," said the baronet, stepping into the light and revealing his face.

"Sir Alvick! Great God!" groaned the prisoner, terrified by this unexpected appearance of his formidable enemy.

"Yes, Olin Cline," said the baronet, "I am Sir Alvick Ulster, and your life is in my hands."

"So you come here to taunt me," growled Cline, bitterly.

"No, to set you free; to destroy the evidences of your crime; to be your friend, if you will be mine."

The prisoner raised himself upon his elbow and fixed his bloodshot eyes upon the baronet sharply.

"It does not matter if you repeat to any one what I say to you, Cline," continued the baronet, carelessly, for no one will believe you, even on oath. Your reputation is utterly bad. But I advise you not to repeat it. I have little time to spare, so listen. Do you know Major Hark Varly?"

"Know him? Yes, and hate him, too," replied Cline, with an oath.

"And why do you hate him?"

"Sir Alvick, I am a bad man, a degraded dog, a hound," replied Cline, in a fierce, bitter growl, which seemed to be rasped from his teeth. "I am all that, and the world knows it well—curse the world! But I loved my daughter. She was fair and spotless until Hark Varly forced himself upon her notice yonder in London. I need say no more, Sir Alvick. She is fair yet, mayhap—but she is not spotless. But for that, and to avenge her, I would not now be here, accused of murdering the German Jew; for I came up to these parts to watch for a chance to get even with Hark Varly, who, I heard, was to be stationed in Ulsterborough. Curse the peddler!"

Sir Alvick's heart leaped with joy, for here was a man who needed little bribing to be let loose like a bloodhound, against Major Hark Varly.

"You are accused of murder," continued the baronet, in the same careless tone, "and though the evidence against you is merely circumstantial, it is, as you say, damning; and, if brought to trial, you will be convicted, condemned, and hanged."

"I know all that, sir. Why tell me of that?"

"Still, though you know you are a doomed man, you would die more willingly could you send Hark Varly from the world before you are ejected by the hangman?"

"I know that I shall be convicted, and I know that I shall be hanged," replied the desperate prisoner; "but I would crack a parting joke with the hangman if I were hanged for killing Major Hark Varly, and not for a miserable peddler. And as for that, Sir Alvick, if I may be so bold, I would be willingly hanged for killing a thousand and forty peddlers, if I could but first settle my little account with that handsome villain, Major Hark Varly."

The prisoner who, as he had so fiercely confessed, was utterly bad, fixed his red and flaming eyes upon the baronet's face with a greedy, wistful eagerness that startled even Alvick Ulster.

"And you would willingly be hanged if you could but settle first your little account with Sir Alvick Ulster," remarked the baronet, ironically.

"No, Sir Alvick. Men, all men, have a right to their hates, and I was wrong in trying to slander any one. I was very foolish in those days—young and rash, besides. But Hark destroyed the one bright spot of my evil, wretched, hopeless life; and, by Heaven! I desire to destroy him before I am sent out of this hated world."

It was plain that the fierce-eyed desperado, who had spent perhaps at least half of his vile life in prison cells, hated intensely Hark Varly, and the rejoiced baronet made haste to say:

"Very well. I will give you a chance for revenge and for liberty. I will leave the door open that you may escape immediately. Major Hark Varly is at this moment in Ulster Manor, and on the point of leaving. You can ascertain whether he has left by hurrying around to the avenue shed—I suppose his horse was tied there. He may have some one with him, as he is an officer. You can ascertain that, also, at a glance. He rides back to Ulsterborough, and, if he has already departed, you can cut him off by a straight course—for you know how the regular road curves. If you encounter him, do as you please. The night is one of gale and storm, and desperately dark. The road is unfamiliar to him, and he must ride slowly. If you need a horse, here is a key to my stables—leave the key in the lock or throw it away. Here is a purse to aid you to escape from England—no, I will keep the purse, as it might be recognized as mine. Here is gold—twenty crowns," said Sir Alvick, as he emptied his purse into the hand of Olin Cline.

"If you are again arrested see that it is not for the settling of your accounts with Major Varly."

"I have no weapons, Sir Alvick."

"A desperate man can find a weapon anywhere. You need nothing better than a bludgeon like that with which you struck down the Jew. You were very foolish to use your knife——"

"Ah, you saw all!"

"I saw all, Olin Cline. But I have my hates as well as you. If you are again arrested upon that charge fear nothing, for I will befriend you. If you are successful, perhaps it will be well for you to return to this cell—I will see that the sentinel does not return before morning. Then, though Major Hark Varly may never reach his bed in Ulsterborough, no one will suspect Olin Cline, who was locked up all night in Ulster-Keep. Do as you please about that, and be governed by circumstances."

"The evidence against me, Sir Alvick? The knife and the shoes?"

"I will destroy them as soon as I hear that some one, unknown, has settled an account with Major Hark Varly," replied the baronet, grimly.

"It does not matter," growled the desperate prisoner. "If you desire it you can have me hanged; and I might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb—as well be hanged for two murders as for one—it is all the same to the man that is hanged. So I have a chance at Hark Varly it does not matter to Olin Cline."

Sir Alvick readjusted his cloak over his face, head and shoulders, and glided from the cell, leaving the door ajar.

The prisoner pocketed the gold he had received, sprang to his feet, and in a moment after was stealing amid the darkness towards the avenue shed, to see if Major Hark Varly had departed or not.

Perfectly familiar with every inch of the grounds of Ulster Manor, Olin Cline, man of blood, man of crime, man of devilish nature, but no more of any blood, crime or devilish nature than the evil man who had set him free, rapidly traversed the distance between the keep and the avenue shed.

Gliding under its projecting eaves he crouched and listened.

He heard the impatient snorting and pawing of horses, and a flash of lightning showed him that there were but two, and each caparisoned in military style.

He turned his face towards the Manor House, which was about two hundred yards distant, and muttered:

"He has not gone yet, nor started, for no one will come for the horses without a lantern."

He groped his way to the animals, making a soothing noise with his tongue and teeth which pacified them as he felt about until he found the holsters.

Carefully emptying the priming from the pans of each pistol, and filling them with dust which he scraped up from the ground, he put the now harmless weapons back into their holsters, muttering:

"I care nothing for their sabres—though Hark Varly may carry pistols in his belt or bosom, as I know he did yonder in London. But I'll lessen the chances of being shot, at least. It is not likely that his orderly carries secret arms, if the major does, and I do not intend that the major shall have a chance to use his."

This done, he again turned his face towards the Manor House, and saw a blaze of light suddenly pour forth as the main hall door was opened, and then saw that it closed, leaving a single and rather dim light dancing amid the darkness.

"They are coming, and with a lantern," muttered Olin Cline, as he darted from under the shed and hid himself behind a tree.

There he waited, until he saw Major Varly and his orderly pass within ten feet of him, and then glided away towards the Ulster stables, thinking:

"I need a horse, Sir Alvick, and may need one for sometime. Return to Ulster keep! What for? To be hanged, after doing you a great favor, no doubt, Sir Alvick."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

REWARD OF WAITING.

BY WILLIE E. PABOR.

If patience brings upon its wings
The blessed balm of healing,
And soothes the soul when o'er it roll
The restless waves of feeling,
Oh! at this hour I need its power
To check the fever spinning,
With freshened force along its course,
My soul to passion winning.

If one could find contented mind,
All ready for the asking,
If one could feel for wo or weal
That faces need no masking,
We'd not let slip between the lip
The words there's no recalling,
We'd only ask consent to bask
Where peace is ever falling.

If there's a shrine where heart of mine
Can find the needed treasure,
O may I win the blessing in
Its purest, amplest measure;
My restless thought by patience taught
Shall then, its zeal abating,
Lie on the breast of perfect rest,
And win REWARD OF WAITING.

THE DEAD HEART.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE EVIL GENIUS," "THE WARNING VOICE," "THE WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XL.

FREE AT LAST.

Thorne's burning eyes devoured the features so long hidden away, and he passionately cried:

"Oh, my love, my life, my cruelly-treated darling, where are you now? What has been your fate through all these years of darkness, and estrangement? Have you given your heart to another? Have you grown hard, and cold, and ceased to remember the lover of your youth?—the unworthy one who gave you up, even while you clung to him in such wild abandonment as led you to prefer death to life without him? Ah, no! while *I* live, you dare not give yourself to another; your faith forbids it, and I thank Heaven for that."

A sudden feeling of shame seemed to come over him, and he thrust the portrait aside, and covered it from his sight.

"Not yet, not yet," he muttered, as he remembered his dying wife, and strongly compressing his lips, he passed through the door, locking it behind him, and moved with light steps towards the furthest wing of the house, in which the apartment of Agnes was situated.

Dr. Brandon had returned to his patient, and on hearing Thorne's approach, he came out, and said:

"Ah, it is you at last. Mrs. Thorne is ready to see you, and she wishes to speak with you with no other witness than her daughter."

Thorne bowed coldly, and passed into the apartment. He glanced keenly at the pale face that lay upon the breast of his daughter, and saw that the physician had spoken truly. Death was in it, and his heart gave a great bound as he thought:

"I shall, indeed, soon be free, but at what possible cost to myself. With her life passes my title to my own estate, if Andrew Courtnay chooses to press the claim he has on me. Yet, why should I fear about that? It was transferred, no doubt, to Claire, as it was won for her benefit. I will seek her, make my peace with her at any cost, and then—well, then, we may regain the faint shadow of the happiness we once enjoyed with each other."

As these thoughts rushed rapidly through his mind, he came to the bedside, sat down on a chair that was placed near it, and in measured tones, said:

"You wished to see me, Mrs. Thorne. Can I do anything for you?"

She turned her eyes on him, and with some bitterness, replied:

"I sent for you that you may see for yourself how near you are to the release for which you have so ardently yearned. You have often told me that the only thing I could do to please you would be to die, and restore to you the freedom of which I had conspired with your father to deprive you."

"Agnes, do not let us bandy reproaches now," he more gently said. "Death condones all wrongs, and mine against you have also been great. I am a resentful man, and I have said and done many things that if I were not my father's son, I might repent of."

"It is true, Walter," went on Mrs. Thorne, as if scarcely heeding his words, "that I hurried you into our most unhappy union, but in those days I loved you beyond expression, and I was mad enough to believe that my passion must in time win its reward. I did not understand your nature, and I have been bitterly punished for the wrong I did you. I found that I only inspired disgust where I hoped for love; but all that is past and gone, and it is vain to recur to it. Beneath your hardness, all that was soft and gentle in my nature soon perished, and I gave back taunt for taunt—bitterness for bitterness."

Agnes paused, exhausted by speaking, and with proud sternness, he replied:

"Then why refer to it now, Mrs. Thorne? We agreed to disagree; that tells the whole story. I am not a better man for the experience through which I have passed with you; but in this hour let us exchange forgiveness; it is all that is left for us now."

"Yes, all," was the faint response. "I sent for you not to speak of myself, but of my daughter. Forget that she is my child; think of her only as yours, and try to be kind to her when I am gone. I have done what I could for her, but now she will be alone, and I entreat that you will be a tender and considerate father to her."

Thorne glanced towards the bowed head of May, and slowly said:

"I cannot imagine why you should deem this charge necessary, Agnes. So long as my daughter is obedient to my wishes, I shall do for her all that she can reasonably expect. I hope that assurance satisfies you."

Mrs. Thorne sighed heavily, and closed her eyes a few moments; her lips moved as if in prayer, and then, with sudden strength, she raised herself from her reclining position, and with feverish energy, replied:

"And is that all you will say to me even in this supreme hour? Yet why should I have hoped for more from *you*? You hate me to that degree, that you shrink from your own child because she is also mine. Well, be it so, Walter Thorne, but retribution is preparing for you. With the clear vision sometimes vouchsafed to the dying, I see the future unrolling as a scroll before me, and I see that in your turn, you will be tortured by an unrequited affection. You will love to madness a woman who will only give you the ashes of the dead heart consumed by your own treachery. I know that you will again seek my rival, and she—yes, she, will avenge me. She promised it to me long ago, and she is not one to forget a pledge she has once given. But *she* will have no love for my poor May, and my darling will be cast out from her home, from her inheritance. *I* see it all. I can comprehend the workings of destiny in this solemn hour, and they will be fatal to the only object of my care."

The words sunk into passionate sobs, and she fell back exhausted on the breast of the weeping girl.

With sombre haughtiness her husband replied:

"It seems to me, Agnes, that you but seek to open a gulf between my daughter and myself. Why will you attempt, in these last moments of your life, to implant in her mind distrust of me? I am her protector, her only refuge, and to me she may surely trust to render her future safe and happy. As to your previsions, they are but hallucinations in which I have no faith. Claire I have never heard from since the day she left Ada Digby's protection, and if I were inclined to seek her, I should not know where she is to be found. If I could find her, I would *compel* her to return to me, and renew the vows that were so cruelly broken. I will not deny to you that I shall seek such happiness as I may now find. I have fasted for it long enough, and my heart is hungry for the sympathy and companionship it could not find in my union with you. If I *could* find that wronged one, I would seek her through the world, and try to make her forget how bitterly I injured her; but I have little hope of being able to do so now. Seventeen years of silence have woven about her a pall of darkness and forgetfulness which it will now be impossible to penetrate; even if I succeeded in finding her, she might refuse to forgive me for the wrongs of the past."

Mrs. Thorne muttered with failing breath—

"No—she will not forgive—she will not avenge——"

Her voice sunk away in a long drawn breath, and Mary uttered a cry of anguish.

"Oh, papa, she is dying! Will you not speak a word of kindness to her in her last moments?"

Her father arose, and gloomily looked down on the pale face on which the shadows of death were rapidly setting. He took the nerveless hand in his own, and with a faint touch of feeling, said:

"I forgive you, Agnes, for the bitter past. If I am hard, remember that you have made me so; do not die exulting in the belief that you divine for me a future more intolerable than my life with you has been."

She feebly muttered:

"I do not exult in it; but it will come to you. Remember my words, and go on to their fulfillment; that is all I have to say. Kiss me, May, and remember my last command."

Her daughter bent over her, but her lips met those of the dead; with her last words life had passed away, and the poor girl sank fainting upon the pillow.

With a faint feeling of compunction Thorne stood a moment silently gazing upon the dead, and the living, and then rang for assistance. May was borne to her own apartment, and the attention she required given her by the housekeeper. Dr. Brandon came in, and after examining his patient, declared life to be extinct.

With proud composure, Walter Thorne stood by; and with a hard feeling of exultation he learned that the clog which had so long fettered him was removed. He looked down at the dead face of the wife he had despised and tortured, but few remorseful regrets arose in his breast. He felt as a man from whose life a crushing weight had suddenly been lifted; and he was not disposed so take up a new burden in the moment of his long wished-for release. He calmly gave such orders as were necessary, for he would not affect a grief he did not feel. Indeed, scrutinizing eyes looked upon him to ascertain if he did not feel exultation in the event of the day. But his conduct was strictly decorous, and as soon as possible he retired to the privacy of his own apartments, into which no one ventured to follow him.

Thorne did not again uncover that haunting face. Some feeling, scarcely comprehensible to himself, withheld him from doing so, though he could not prevent his thoughts from wandering to that long-buried past, and living over in fancy that rapturous dream of love and romance.

Such men as he love with desperation, hate with a bitterness unknown to tamer souls, and she who was just gone had only possessed the power to arouse the tiger in his nature. Even at the last, when he would have made an effort to be gentle with her, the estrangement between them made itself cruelly felt, and he had found it impossible to be otherwise than cold and hard, even when she was passing away forever.

He scarcely thought of his daughter at all, and when he said he only resented the little confidence his wife evidently had in him as the guardian of her child's future happiness, he recalled the last words of Agnes, and marvelled of what nature that command was to which she had referred. He half savagely muttered:

"It was something to place May in opposition to me—I understand that very well. But china does not do well to come in contact with iron, as her mother would have taught her if she had been wise. Well, well, we shall see soon enough now."

The funeral took place in due time, and a large concourse of people came to see Mrs. Thorne laid in the family burying ground, and to make such observations on the state of affairs at Thornhill as were possible.

They only saw a sombre, stern man, who went through the ceremonial with all proper outward respect for the dead wife whose heart he was accused of having broken, and a pale, drooping girl shrouded in crape and bombazine, who shrank with nervous shyness from the expressions of sympathy that were addressed to her.

No one ventured to offer condolences to Mr. Thorne, for his relations toward the departed were too well known to induce his neighbors to believe they would be well received.

The ordinary routine of life at Thornhill was scarcely interrupted by the decease of the mistress of the establishment, for she had so long been an invalid that no one looked to her for orders. A competent housekeeper had for years been in charge of the establishment, and no one missed the unhappy lady save that desolate girl who looked out from her lonely room with the dreary consciousness that she was bereft of the only heart that ever loved her.

CHAPTER XLI.

PLOTS FOR THE FUTURE.

Now that his wife was gone, Walter Thorne, with some uneasiness, recalled the words of Courtnay—that, while she lived, no claim to the large sum he had lost to him at the gaming-table would be put forward. He believed that Claire had instigated that unusual proceeding, and that to her would be given the power to ruin him, if she wished to proceed to extremes.

But Thorne did not feel much uneasiness on that score; he flattered himself that, if he could meet her again face to face, he could disarm her resentment and bring her back to his arms as loving, if less confiding, than in those early days of passionate enchantment.

But to whom should he apply to inform him of all that had befallen her through these long years of silence and estrangement? He suspected that Ada Digby could give him the information he so much desired to possess, for he felt convinced that a straggling correspondence was still kept up by her with the former object of her care; but he had quarrelled with Miss Digby two years before, because he thought she too openly espoused the cause of his wife against himself, and no communication was held between Thornhill and the cottage.

At present, she was absent from home; and if his pride would have stooped to apply to her for the information he wanted, his impatience to learn something definite would not permit him to await her return. Thorne had held no communication with Courtnay since that night, in Washington, four years before; but, shortly after the decease of his wife, he addressed him the following letter:

"THORNHILL, March 2, 18—.

"MR. COURTNAY—Sir: I shall not leave you to learn from the public prints that the wife in whose existence my title to your forbearance lay, is dead. It is now two weeks since she was buried, and I am naturally anxious to know what effect her decease will have upon my fortune.

"In my madness on that fatal night, I lost a sum which will cover the entire value of my estate, handsome as it is; and if you now press for payment, I must reduce myself to penury, or become dishonored by refusing to pay a debt which *gentlemen* regard as more binding than those secured by law. Of course, the last resource will be impossible to me, and but one other means of settlement remains.

"I have reflected deeply on the singular compact you made with me, and I can come to but one conclusion, and that is, that my first wife is the party to be benefitted by this transaction. If Claire proposed to herself to gain power over me in this way and bring me back to my old allegiance to herself, it was a *ruse* unworthy of her and quite unnecessary.

"Now that I am free to express my true feelings and there is no one to dictate to me the course of action I must pursue, I find but one desire in my heart—that is, to reclaim my repudiated wife, and endeavor to atone to her for the suffering I most unwillingly inflicted upon her. You, who have always been the master of your own actions, can scarcely understand the force of the pressure brought to bear on me in those youthful days in which I was held under the iron rule of a father who never swerved from a decision he had once made.

"The wrong I committed against Claire was to marry her at all, knowing as I did the inflexible will I had to contend with; but I was so infatuated that I hoped for impossibilities, and I used most questionable means to obtain her consent to an elopement.

"I do not defend what followed. I was literally *forced* to give her up, or to bring her to poverty. I purchased my father's forgiveness by accepting the wife he had chosen for me, but no happiness sprang from that union. It is ended now, and I am once more free to return to the object around whom all my tenderest thoughts have clustered, even while another claimed me as her husband.

"Claire refused to recognize the validity of the legal decision which freed us both, and therefore I believe she is still as much my wife as she considered herself in the days of our early separation. I do not wish to present myself before her as one possessing any right over her, but I shall be glad to know where she at present resides, that I may seek her and endeavor to win forgiveness for that past which I was powerless to control. I know that I grievously sinned against her, but I was also sinned against myself, and she is not the Claire of old, if she refuses to take that into consideration.

"I have never dared inquire concerning her, lest I should break from the bonds that bound me and seek her in defiance of all. I know that she went to France with your mother, and remained with her half-brother, but beyond that all is darkness. Pray, write without delay, and inform me of her whereabouts, and also enlighten me as to what I am to expect with reference to the bond you hold against me.

"Respectfully, W. THORNE."

After an interval of ten days, a reply came—brief, and to the point:

"THE GRANGE, March 7th, 18—.

"MR. THORNE: Permit me to say to you, in reply to yours of the 2d, that the bond to which you refer is no longer in my possession. What use the party to whom it was transferred will choose to make of it, I cannot say. The death of your wife was to be the signal for action, and I have no power to retard it.

"As to Claire, I do not think that any concessions will avail to obtain her forgiveness for the past, and therefore I decline giving you her address.

"Respectfully, ANDREW COURTNAY."

Walter Thorne read this curt reply with a sardonic curl of his lip, but he grew pale as he thought of possible consequences to himself. His next thought was, how he should pay off the debt if the claim were presented. In the last four years, he had saved a considerable sum from his annual income; and the settlement of his wife, if he could gain the control of it, would enable him, at least, to stave off ruin.

He had not yet examined her papers, but under the spur of his present excitement, he went in search of her desk and brought it to the library for examination. In that she had probably left some clue to the disposition of her property. Under the circumstances, it may be imagined with what feelings he found and read the following letter addressed to himself:

"January 20th, 18—.

"WALTER: I write to you what I could not tell you without a scene of angry recrimination, which I am unable to bear in my present state of health.

"You are aware that the money left to me by my father was placed in the hands of a trustee for the benefit of myself. Under the settlement, I have the right to dispose of it as I please, and I have left it to my daughter to do with as she chooses from the day of my death; but I shall exact from her a promise to retain the control of her little fortune, and I request you to refrain from attempting to wrest from her what I have given her.

"I foresee for my poor child a hard and cruel lot. You do not love her—you will probably soon seek to marry her to some one chosen by yourself, that you may free your house from her unwelcome presence. If she refuses obedience, you will cast her off, and May will have nothing to save her from poverty but the sum of fifteen thousand dollars which I have bequeathed to her.

"Allow her to retain it in peace, I entreat. Do not make her life unhappy by persecuting her to break the promise I shall obtain from her. You will not succeed, for she is true to her word, and she will not recede from what she has pledged herself to do.

"My poor child would love you, Walter, if she had any encouragement to do so; when I am gone, draw her nearer to your heart, and try to make up to her for the loss she will so keenly feel. Deprived of the only heart on which she has been permitted to lean, she will need consolation; she will be left alone in the world, with no one to turn to but you. Oh, Walter, think of this and be kind to her.

"If you would lay aside your resentment toward Ada Digby, and ask her to come to Thornhill as a companion for May, I should feel more willing to leave her. Think of this, and if you can gain your own consent to comply with this last request from her who would have been a true and loving wife to you, had you not crushed out every spark of affection by your own indifference or something worse.

"AGNES THORN."

Walter Thorne read over these lines with a frowning brow, and angry heart. They did not appeal to his better feelings, as their writer had hoped. The antagonism between himself and the wife who had been forced on his acceptance survived even beyond the grave, and with a suppressed oath he muttered:

"Ada Digby, indeed! She shall never come beneath my roof to sustain my daughter in rebellion against me; to sit up in judgment on me, as she is so fond of doing. So that is settled."

With a portentous frown he gathered up the scattered papers, restored them to the desk from which they had been taken, and sharply rang the bell. When a servant came he abruptly said:

"Inform Miss Thorne that I wish to see her in this room."

In a few moments May entered, looking pale and agitated, for such a summons was an unusual thing, and she feared that something unpleasant was about to happen. Thorne pointed to a chair, and brusquely said:

"I have been looking over your mother's papers, and among them I have found a letter addressed to myself. In it she asks me to give you my affectionate care, as if she had supposed me such a monster as to withhold it, if it is deserved. She has placed you in opposition to me on purpose to produce estrangement between us, and I have sent for you to see if you value my affection sufficiently to make a sacrifice to retain it."

May sunk down upon the seat and endeavored to stifle the rapid pulsations of her heart at this abrupt address. She feared her father much more than she loved him, but she possessed a power of resistance he had not calculated on. She tremulously replied:

"I would do much to gain your approbation, papa, but I hoped you would spare me any contest with regard to the last wishes of my mother. They are sacred to me, sir, and I dare not disobey them."

"So-o—you are ready to assert your independence of me, are you? but I will yet break you to my will, and show you, as I did her that is gone, that I am master of your fate."

"I promise to do my best to please you, papa; you need have no fear that I shall prove a disobedient daughter to you, even if I do refuse to violate the promise I gave my poor mother when she lay dying; for of course you refer to that."

He angrily said:

"There is but one thing you can do to prove that you understand your duty to me, and that is to comply with the demand I now make to surrender the management of your money to me. I shall waste no words on you—I *require* you to do this."

May placed her hand over her palpitating heart, and for a few moments the words that formed themselves upon her lips refused to come forth. Her father's stern eyes were fixed upon her, and she shrank before their fiery light. At length she faltered:

"I have every confidence in you, papa, but it is impossible for me to violate the promise I made to the dead. I dare not, even if I incur your displeasure by refusing to do so. I am your daughter, sir; I understand my duty toward you, and the possession of a few thousands will not induce me to play the part of a rebellious child. Have confidence in me, and respect the feeling that dictates opposition to your will."

"Confidence! I can have none in the prudence of a girl of your age. It is an insult to *me* that you are in a measure placed beyond my control. Your mother acted thus because she wished to produce dissension between us; there could have been no other motive for such a proceeding. Your beggarly pittance is of small importance to a man of my fortune; but it is enough to become a snare for you—to render you an object of speculation to some needy spendthrift, who may marry you for this money, knowing that with your hand he can gain possession of it. It is that I wish to guard you against."

May recalled what her mother had said on this very subject, and her determinaton was strengthened to be firm in her refusal to comply with her father's demands. She gently but decidedly said:

"It is very painful to me to refuse what you ask, papa; but I cannot break the pledge I gave to my mother in her last moments. If you will be gentle and kind with me, you shall have no cause to complain of me, although I do retain the right to the undisputed possession of her legacy."

"Am I to understand that you refuse? absolutely and positively refuse?"

She bent her head in assent, and Thorne started from his seat and paced the floor rapidly for many moments. May trembled in the anticipation of a violent outburst of passion, such as she had often witnessed between himself and her mother; but angry as he was, her father controlled the torrent of furious words that were ready to burst from his lips. He saw how much the poor girl had suffered, for she looked scarcely able to be out of her bed, and he also felt the assurance that if she possessed any portion of his spirit she would not submit to be trampled on.

Thorne thought it best to try other means to subdue her to his will, and he at length stopped in front of her, and in measured tones said:

"There is but one way left to protect you from the dangers I foresee for you. Until you have acceded to my demand, I will seclude you from society; you shall live here alone under the strict watch of Mrs. Benson, for I can trust her to play the part of the duenna. You shall visit no one—receive no guests. Our neighbors do not trouble themselves much about us, but if any of them should call, I shall order them to be refused admittance. You will go nowhere but to church, and not even there, unless the housekeeper can accompany you. We shall see how you will bear this enforced solitude, for I am going away in a few days, to be absent I do not know how long. If you repent of your obstinacy and yield to my demand, I will take you to some fashionable place of resort this summer, and give you such advantages as my only child should enjoy. If not, you can remain immured here till I find some one to take you off my hands."

May bowed her head and faintly said:

"I must submit to your will, sir, though it will be cruel to leave me here with no society at all. Mrs. Benson is not an educated woman, and she is no companion for me. I venture to entreat that you will ask my cousin, Ada Digby, to come to me. She is the only person who would be willing to do so for my mother's sake; and in my present state of feeling her society will be more congenial to me than that of younger persons."

"I dare say," he scornfully replied. "But it is not my object to give you a *congenial* companion. Besides, Ada Digby is the last person I would voluntarily ask to come to my house as an inmate. She is a meddlesome person, who takes it on herself to give her opinion on subjects that do not concern her. You may give up hope of having *her* for your friend, for I will never tolerate her presence near me. If you find the life to which I condemn you intolerable, all you have to do to change it is to notify me of your willingness to comply with the terms I just now stated."

"Oh, papa! I shall die in this solitude!" exclaimed May. "If my cousin is not permitted to come to me, I entreat that you will place me in a good boarding-school where I can complete my imperfect education."

"And have a notification sent to me from the principal in a few months, that you have eloped with some popinjay," he sardonically replied. "No, thank you, Miss Thorne; I shall not place you in the way of such a temptation as that. To allow you to go forth into the world on any terms would defeat the object I have in view. Your education is certainly not what it should be, but if I find you unmanageable, I shall employ a private teacher who will be in my interests. I will hold the disposal of your fate in my own hands, in spite of the efforts made by your mother to place it beyond my control."

"Oh, papa! my mother had no such intention, nor have I a thought that is in opposition to you. Only love me—only be kind to your poor desolate child, and I will do all that is possible to please you."

Mr. Thorne inflexibly replied:

"I ask but one thing of you. Grant that and there will be no cause of disagreement between us. The absurd settlement made by your dead mother should not stand in opposition to the will of your living father."

May clasped her hands over her brow, and mentally asked for strength to combat this iron will. The father sat silently watching her, believing that she was about to yield; but, after a struggle for composure, she firmly replied:

"I cannot do what you ask, sir. Remorse would haunt me if I complied with your demand. I find myself placed in a cruel position, but I must do what I believe to be right."

Finding her so unyielding, Thorne's anger burst forth in a torrent of bitter words which he could no longer repress. He forgot all she had lately borne, or was reckless of it, for Walter Thorne never restrained the expression of his rage when it mastered him. The pale girl put up her hand in a deprecating manner, but he heeded her not, and as she attempted to rise from her seat she sunk nearly insensible at his feet.

He almost spurned her from him, as he contemptuously exclaimed:

"Puling, sentimental fool! with no strength either of body or mind! It is enough to turn a man's brain to have two such women to deal with as this girl and her mother. I am rid of one, thank Heaven! and I'll find some one to take the other off my hands as soon as possible."

His daughter had sunk down from weakness and exhaustion, but her senses had not entirely deserted her, and she heard and comprehended his cruel words. She made an effort to raise herself, and Thorne furiously rang the bell.

A servant answered it so promptly as to induce the belief that she had been hovering somewhere in the vicinity of the library. He pointed to May, and sternly said:

"Assist Miss Thorne to her room, and tell Mrs. Benson that I wish to see her here immediately."

The girl offered her hand to her young mistress, and aided her to rise. May turned her agitated face toward her father, and her white lips moved as if trying to syllable words, but the imperious domestic autocrat haughtily said:

"Go to your apartment, and remain there. I wish to hear nothing more from you at present; nor will you see me again while I remain here, unless you bend your stubborn will to mine."

A faint gleam of color came into her pallid face, and the flash of the dark eyes raised to his own for a single instant, showed him that a feeling of resistance was aroused in that helpless girl which he would find it very difficult to conquer. May closed her lips firmly, and walked without assistance toward the door.

As it closed on her, her father muttered:

"There was a flash of the Thorne spirit, but it won't do with me. That rebellious girl shall yet find that I am her master. I almost wish I had said nothing on the subject, vital as the possession of this money is to me just now; but, as I have laid down the law, she must abide the consequences, if she refuses to succomb. The men of my race have never allowed women to rule them."

The Thornes, of Thornhill, had indeed been an imperious race: they had been known in the State since its first settlement by William Penn. The founder of the family was the younger son of a wealthy English gentleman; and, with the money he brought with him to the colonies, he purchased large tracts of land from the Indians, which, in time, became very valuable. He married a young French girl whose parents escaped from the Huguenot persecutions in their native land, and found an asylum in Maryland.

Basil Thorne left an only son to inherit his large estate; and when that son was gathered to his fathers', two children divided the paternal inheritance. The daughter married, and removed with her husband to South Carolina; and her brother remained on the paternal acres as the representative of his family. He led a fast and dissipated life, and, when he died, his widow and son were left with the mere wreck of his magnificent fortune. The mother was a woman of strong sense and great pride. She saw in her young son the germs of talent, and she sacrificed her remaining resources to afford him a thorough education. He repaid her by his devotion to study, and afterward by his diligence in the profession she had chosen for him. The elder Walter Thorne became a distinguished and successful lawyer; regained a large portion of the patrimony his father had squandered; and shortly after his marriage with a penniless Spanish girl, he went with her on a visit to Cuba, he re-built the family residence in handsome style. His wife died in the second year of their union, leaving one son, the haughty, obstinate and imperious man, who, like his ancestors, would not permit himself to be thwarted with impunity, or forgive the person who had crossed his path.

The musings of Thorne on this family history were interrupted by a tap upon the door; the next instant it opened, and a stout, middle-aged woman, with some pretentions to beauty, came in. She smiled, courtesied, and her employer pointed to a chair, and said:

"Sit down, if you please, Mrs. Benson; I wish to speak with you on business."

The housekeeper spread out her black skirts, simpered, and prepared to listen to what he had to say. She was a sharp, inquisitive-looking woman, with small black eyes and a turned-up nose: her mouth had a disagreeable expression, but the lips were red and full, and her complexion still fair and blooming. Mrs. Benson's dress was always scrupulously neat; and, in her own department, she was an unrivalled manager. She fully understood her own value, and stood very little in awe of the man who made all the rest of his household tremble before him.

Finding that Mr. Thorne did not speak at once, Mrs. Benson demurely said:

"I hopes, sir, that nothing aint gone wrong in which I am discerned. I have tried to please you to the very best of my debility, Mr. Thorne."

The housekeeper's abuse of language was too familiar to him to elicit a smile, though the heavy frown faded from his brow, and he lightly replied:

"You are a jewel of a manager, Mrs. Benson, and I am perfectly satisfied with all you have done. I summoned you hither to show you the perfect confidence I have in you, by entrusting you with the control of my daughter during my absence. I shall be away some time, and I wish you to keey a strict watch over May every day of her life."

The woman looked surprised. She said: "I'm ready to do whatever you remand, sir, but I hardly think Miss May will remit to have me put over her."

"Of course you are ready to obey my orders, let them concern whom they may; and it is you who are not to remit your vigilant care over your charge while I am gone. Miss Thorne and myself have had a misunderstanding, which will prove rather a serious thing for her, unless she comes to her proper senses, and is made to understand that I am the arbiter of her destiny. I shall leave Thornhill to-morrow for an indefinite period, and I commit my daughter to your especial charge. She is not to see any one except the old German who gives her lessons in music and drawing. I do not wish visitors to be admitted, if any should come; and May is not to go beyond the grounds on any pretext, except to church; nor is she to go there unaccompanied by you. I wish you to understand that, on such occasions, you are to keep your eyes open, and allow her to speak with no one."

Mrs. Benson stretched her small eyes very wide, and blurted out, "She ain't thinking of falling in love with nobody, I hope, sir; ef she aint, it's curus that you are so pertickler all to onct. I ain't hearn tell o' anybody comin' here arter her, though she's a nice-looking young lady, and a great heiress, too."

Thorne bit his lips, and haughtily said:

"That may or may not be, Mrs. Benson. If my daughter had proved herself worthy of my confidence, she would certainly have had a sufficient fortune from me; but, as matters stand at present, I scarcely think she will ever inherit Thornhill. My property is my own, to dispose of as I please, and it will certainly not descend to the child who has placed herself in opposition to my wishes. I desire that others shall also understand this; I do not choose to have fortune-hunters coming in pursuit of Miss Thorne. Her mother has left her something—but, little as it is, it may tempt persons of that class, and May is yet very young and inexperienced. It is to guard her from making an unsuitable match, that I leave her under your strict charge. I shall hold you responsible for her; you are not to lose sight of her when she walks out; you are an active woman, and can take as much exercise as she is likely to desire. I hope you understand me, Mrs. Benson; I will make it worth while to you to play the part of Cerberus while I am away."

He took out his pocket-book, and laid before her a note of considerable value. The black eyes of the housekeeper twinkled with greed, and her fat hand closed on the bribe as she diffidently said:

"Many thanks, sir, for your renificence; but I don't perzactly know what a Cerbus is. Ef you'll tell me, I'll try to be it, I'm sure."

Thorne laughed at this, and lightly said:

"Well, Madame Malaprop, Cerberus was a particularly sharp watch-dog, whose services were important to the ancient of days. I wish you to be as watchful, and as faithful as he was said to be, and I shall have no cause of complaint against you."

"I'm shure I shan't give you none, sir; but I don't know how Miss May will stand it. She aint fond o' me no how, and I'm afeard she'll run restiff if I am set to watch her, though in course I'll do my best, sir, to keep her from harm; she'll think her dignitude is put on some, I guess, sir, she'll begin to stand on it."

"Miss Thorne understands from me that you are to be responsible for her. I have issued my orders to her, and I scarcely think she will attempt to disobey them; you need not regard her dignity; all you have to do is to maintain your own, and from my knowledge of you I think you will be perfectly able to do that. Perfect seclusion is what I desire for my daughter. She is to be made to feel that she is held a prisoner in these grounds, and never to be permitted to go beyond them unwatched until she has yielded to the demand I made of her this morning. What that demand was is no concern of yours; all you have to do is to be faithful to the trust I have reposed in you, and earn a pretty addition to your salary by exercising your vigilance while I am away. I believe you now fully understand what is required of you?"

"Yes, sir, I think I do. I will keep Miss May all right and safe till you come back to Thornhill; but I hopes, sir, that you'll not be long away."

"My return is uncertain, but you will write to me regularly, sending my letters to Washington to the old address. The gloom of this place oppresses me—I must have a change. But whenever I do come back, Mrs. Benson, it will be to inaugurate a new style of life here. I have lived as a hermit long enough, and some day I shall throw open my doors and fill the house with company. Your position will hardly be a sinecure then, eh, Mrs. Benson?"

"So much the better, sir; 'taint no sin to love company, an' I aint naterally fond of sollertude. I'd rather take the trouble to git up a dinner for twenty people than to sit down to the table gloom like with only two or three. But discuse me, sir, I don't mean to insinerate nothin' agin my way of life here. I've saved money in your service, Mr. Thorne, an' I've had a good time in this house since I've lived in it a managin' of all its consarns myself."

"I am glad to hear that you are satisfied, Mrs. Benson, and it will be your own fault if you do not have a better time in the days that are coming."

The housekeeper flushed slightly, and wondered what the last words meant; but Thorne did not notice her embarressment, and calmly went on:

"But for the gossip of the people of the neighborhood I would bring my friends around me at once, and make the old place as gay as it used to be in my father's best days. But that will not answer here so soon after the death of my wife. I must keep up appearances, you know."

"Oh, as to that, sir, so rich a gentleman as you can do what he pleases; you needn't care about other people's palaver. It won't come to nothin' arter all; it's only spent breath you know, sir, an' you aint the person to care for that. I'd do jest as I chose, and never mind other folks gab. I never thought you did care for it much afore."

"Well, the truth is, I don't care as much for the *vox populi* as I ought," he replied with a laugh, "but I expected you to be the last one to advise me to disregard such things, Mrs. Benson."

He often took a mischievous pleasure in puzzling the housekeeper by using such words as she could not comprehend, but nothing daunted she said:

"If you only give grand entertainments, Mr. Thorne, you will always be in the popular box; and as to the countenances of the people, you'll soon see 'em brighten up, an' look smiling enough when they sit down to one of your fine dinners, or suppers; an' it's me that will do my best to keep up the credit of the house."

"I don't doubt it, Mrs. Benson; and when the new *régime* is established, you shall have *carte blanche* as to the expense."

Mrs. Benson pondered a moment over his meaning, but she would not appear ignorant, and she finally said: "If you should bring a whole team in a cart, sir, there'll be no need of getting blankets to cover them. That expense won't be necessary, for we have plenty of bed-clothes, and to spare."

"So much the better, Mrs. Benson; and now having said all that is necessary, I will give you your *congé*."

"Thank you kindly, sir; whatever you are willing to give me, I will thankfully accept," and the housekeeper arose and courtesied, comprehending the motion of his hand toward the door as a signal for her to retire, though profoundly mystified as to what he proposed to give her.

"Something handsome, I dare say," she thought, as she left the room, "for Mr. Thorne is a liberal gentleman, in spite of his strange ways an' the hard words he is so fond of using. I wish my eddication hadn't been so poor; I h'aint much book larnin', but I've made the most o' my opportunties, an' I don't lack sense. What *could* he have meant by saying 'twould be my own fault ef I didn't have a better time in this house than I've had afore? I'm not a bad-looking woman, and he wants a good manager for his house. Who knows what may happen? for Mr. Thorne's known to be so bad tempered that it wouldn't be eesy for him to find another wife among the high-flyers he belongs to. *I* ain't aferrd on him, an' ef I'm cute enough, mebbe I may be mistress here in place of housekeeper one of these days. It's worth trying for, anyhow; an' *I* wouldn't be put down like that poor sickly creetur was that's jest gone."

Indulging in these fallacious hopes, Mrs. Benson carefully put away the money her employer had given her, and hastened to order for dinner such things as she knew he particularly liked. Many a man has been won, she well knew, by attention to his physical comfort, and she began to hope that the master of Thornhill might prove one of that class, though hitherto she had had little reason to think so.

Thorne was abstemious in his habits except in the use of wine, and he cared little what was provided for him if it was properly prepared and handsomely served. As May was forbidden to leave her chamber for the present, the scheming housekeeper had the field to herself; she presided at the supper table, and poured out the fragrant tea, but she felt rather crest-fallen to observe that Mr. Thorne was too much absorbed in his own thoughts to be conscious of the exquisite flavor of the viands she had assisted to prepare with her own fair hands.

He did not speak a word during the repast, and left her alone as soon as he had satisfied his appetite. She consoled herself for this by reflecting that he was annoyed by the conduct of his daughter, and again deluded herself with anticipations of what might be.

CHAPTER XLII.

A NEW DEVELOPMENT.

Walter Thorne did not again attempt to see his daughter before his departure, but he left for her a few brief lines informing her that when she had made up her mind to render him the obedience he had a right to demand, she could write to him, and Mrs. Benson would forward her letter. Until then, he had no wish to receive any communication from her.

Thus coldly and harshly did he leave the poor girl to the solitude of that desolate house. Romantic, tender, capable of loving deeply, and truly, May found herself in the first flush of youth, shut out from all that is most ardently desired in the budding spring time of life.

As the weeks passed on, so dreadful did the tedium of her life become, that if she had dared, she would have sacrificed her little fortune to gain a release from it; but when she was tempted to do so, the face of her dying mother arose before her with its expression of pale earnestness, and she shrank from violating the pledge she had given, as if from a sacrilege.

Miss Thorne saw no one save the domestics of the family, and an old gray-haired German who came out twice a week to give her a music lesson; Mr. Herber was so stupid, and so much wrapped up in his profession, that he could talk on no other subject; but uninteresting as he was, even his visits came to be looked forward to by the lonely girl as an agreeable diversion to the monotony of her weary life.

Weeks lapsed into months, and still there was no intimation from her father of any intention to return to Thornhill. No communication had passed between them, though May was aware that at regular intervals the housekeeper wrote to Mr. Thorne, and received a few lines in reply, containing directions as to the management of the place; but he rarely referred to his daughter in any way.

The solitary girl would not make a companion of Mrs. Benson, for her pretentious ignorance was too distasteful to her; besides, May soon suspected that she was placed as a spy over her. She could not leave the house without finding her on her steps, but she avenged herself on the fat housekeeper by walking far, and fast, in the hope that she would repent of the part she had undertaken to perform, and give up her annoying surveillance.

May did not like Mrs. Benson, but she was always polite to her, and her pride prevented her from remonstrating against her watchfulness. If her father chose to subject her to such indignity, she must bear it, but she would make no sign by which her duenna could discover how much she resented her forced companionship. But her heart grew bitter and hardened towards the parent who treated her in so shameful a manner, and she thought herself justified in taking any measure that would free her from his tyranny.

May thought many times of writing to Miss Digby, to entreat her to receive her beneath her roof; if consent was given, she would elope from her dreary prison, and never return to it unless brought back by force. But she remembered that she was not of age, and she felt certain that her father would reclaim her at all hazards; so that avenue of escape closed before her, and she sunk into that state of apathy in which nothing gives pleasure.

Music, for which she had great taste, jarred on her nerves; books became a weariness; and the long exhausting walks she daily took were only tolerable because they fatigued her to that degree that sleep came as a blessing and wrapped her in forgetfulness for many hours after they were over.

In this dearth of social enjoyment the solitary girl eagerly read such newspapers as came to the house. Mr. Thorne subscribed for several of the leading journals of New York and Philadelphia, and reading them seemed, in some way, to link her with the active, stirring crowds in which she so ardently longed to enter, that she might seek and find the companionship and sympathy denied her in her own home.

When the news of the day was exhausted May read the advertisements, because they gave her an idea of the busy, bustling life beyond her retreat. One column in the city papers afforded her most vivid interest. It was that in which advertisements addressed to lost or absent ones is found, and she pondered over them for hours, constructing fanciful romances from such hints as they afforded.

One day, in looking over the paper, she found the following lines:

> "A lonely heart seeks companionship. The writer of this is young—not ill-looking; he possesses wherewithal to make life a fairy scene of enchantment, but, alas! he is painfully shy, and cannot make the first advances, unless some encouragement is given him beforehand. Fair Eve, who is destined to become the minister of happiness to your lonely Adam, pray send a response to this appeal, and it will be joyfully received, and promptly responded to. Address A. R., box No. ——, Philadelphia."

May smiled over this singular appeal, and wondered if the writer expected anything to come of it; but the opening words struck an answering chord in her heart, and she read it again and again, each time trying to picture the appearance of the writer more vividly to her fancy.

There was one point of sympathy between them, at least: he was lonely in heart, and who could understand that better than the neglected daughter of Walter Thorne? May kept that paper on her table, and day after day she read the advertisement, till an interest in its writer was aroused which the dull sameness of her outer-life only deepened and intensified.

At length she was tempted to reply to him. Perhaps he was the knight who would break her bonds, and give her the freedom she so ardently panted for. He was not one of the fortune-hunters against whom her father had warned her, for he already possessed sufficient means of his own; and it never occurred to the inexperienced girl that the writer of the advertisement could deliberately intend to deceive her who should in good faith reply to him.

The craving want of sympathy and companionship is the only excuse I can offer for her; but the imprudent step which might have sealed her unhappiness for life, led to an acquaintance with one who proved himself worthy of the affection he won, though that person was not the writer of the appeal which had so deeply interested her.

The advertisement inserted in the paper had been written in a frolic by a young law student in Philadelphia, that he might amuse himself with the replies he received. He had no idea of anything beyond that; for, except that he was young, Alfred Ransom was the reverse of all he had represented himself. Vanity might have induced him to believe that he was not ill-looking—but he was short, stout and dark, with coarse features, and ill-made hands and feet. A more unpromising hero for a romance could scarcely have been found; nor did he possess the means he had referred to, as his allowance from his father barely sufficed to afford him a meagre maintenance while pursuing his studies.

Ransom sat in his dingy room beside a table covered with letters, all of which had been sent in reply to his advertisement, and he was laughing like a madman over some of them, when an application for admittance was made at his door. He shouted to the visitor to come in, and a slender, fair young man entered, bringing with him several books.

"Ah, it's you, Sinclair; you're just in time, old fellow; come here and have some fun. Such a lot of stuff as that advertisement of mine has showered on me is perfectly astounding. Women must be precious guys to believe in such chaff as a matrimonial advertisement."

The young man thus addressed came forward and stood beside the table with an expression on his fair and honest face that was easily decipherd. It was one of disapprobation, verging on disgust. He was a very pleasing-looking person, with a bright, candid face, clear, dark-blue eyes, and a quantity of soft brown hair thrown back from a broad, intellectual brow. In a tone of reproof, he said:

"How can you amuse yourself in so questionable a manner, Ransom? Many of the women who wrote those replies were no more in earnest than you are; but a few among them may have been, and if so you have much to answer for."

"Stuff! don't begin to lecture, old sobersides, for I'm in no humor to listen. My life was beginning to stagnate, and I must find something to amuse me—I can't afford to be extravagant, so I've played the sentimental. Here's one who tells me she has gushing sensibilities, a heart tuned to all the tender emotions, and all that gammon. Read them yourself, Harry, and see what prime fun it is to have such lots of love made to such a looking fellow as I am."

Sinclair smiled faintly, but shook his head.

"I tried to dissuade you from this folly, Albert, but you would not listen to me. I do not wish to read any of the replies elicited by your false appeal to public sympathy. As to your looks, they are good enough to win you a wife when you are able to take one."

"Are they? I'm glad to hear that, though I protest that my glass does not flatter me to the same extent. You need not have any scruples about looking over these precious effusions, for I don't suppose their writers were verdant enough to put their true names to them. By Jupiter! I am wrong though, for here is one that seems to mean more than the others, and the name at the end is one I know very well too. Ah, if that advertisement had only told the truth, what a happy man I might be. Look—you will read this, Harry, for it was written by one of the sweetest little budding women in the land."

Ransom thrust beneath the eyes of his companion a rose-tinted billet, which exhaled a delicate perfume. It was open, and Sinclair saw the name at the bottom of the page—"May Thorne."

He smiled faintly as he pointed to the signature, and said:

"I should say that was the most fanciful name selected by any of your fair correspondents."

"But it is a real name, and I have seen the girl that bears it. It's not long ago, either: I was in L—— attending to some business for my father a month ago, as you already know. While there, I went to church, and saw the writer of this letter under the convoy of a regular she-dragon."

"A guardianship she seems to need," was the dry response.

"But wait till you know all that I can tell you. May Thorne is barely sixteen—she knows nothing of life, and she is allowed no opportunity to mingle with young persons of her own age. Her mother died last winter, and she has been shut up at Thornhill—that is, not exactly shut up, for she can walk in the grounds around the place, and they are quite extensive; but she isn't allowed to see any company, nor to go out without having that fat old housekeeper trudging after her. Her father is a tyrant, who goes off to seek his own pleasure, leaving her so much alone that I hardly wonder at the poor thing being touched by my lying advertisement. Just read the few lines she has ventured to write: I declare they make me feel that you were right, after all, Harry, to dissuade me from such a piece of villainy."

He thrust the paper in Sinclair's hand, and he involuntarily glanced over the contents. The words were simple enough, but they evidently came from the heart of the writer, and they touched that of the reader. He slowly said:

"It was very imprudent in her to write this, but she must be very honest-hearted herself to to believe your statements, and reply to them in good faith. What you have told me is some excuse for her, however; but why should her father act so harshly toward her?"

"Because he's afraid some man will snap her up who is on the lookout for an heiress. Mr. Thorne has taken pains to let it be known that she will not inherit his estate, but she has a few thousands from her mother that he thinks might tempt some needy adventurer to make love to her. If she hadn't a dime, she is sweet enough and pretty enough to attract any man. If I was only as handsome a fellow as you are now, after this romantic commencement, I might go in and win; but she is too refined and delicate to fancy such a rough-looking Calliban as I am."

"What is Miss Thorne's style?" asked Sinclair, with a feeling of interest he could not repress.

"Just your opposite, Harry. She is fairy-like, with black hair, and eyes that are like stars. She isn't a great beauty, but she is pretty and graceful. I declare I feel as mean as if I had done her a great wrong."

"Don't take it too much to heart, Alfred: no harm will be done unless you reply to her letter and entrap her into a correspondence that will mean nothing."

"I'll never do that. I'll tear it up, but I shall keep the others to have my own fun over."

He held out his hand for the missive, but Sinclair smiled and said:

"Allow me to keep it, Al.; I am interested in what you have told me about its writer, and when I go to L—— to attend the circuit court next month, I shall try to see her. What church does she attend?"

"The Episcopal Chapel on —— street; you may keep the note if you choose, but if you were to seek her acquaintance, her father would give you a rebuff. He would be sure to class a poor lawyer among the fortune-seekers."

"No man can be called poor who has brains, education, and a willingness to work," said Sinclair, in reply. "As Miss Thorne is not to inherit her father's wealth, the few thousands you spoke of could scarcely influence a man deserving of the name, to make her his wife. I do not know that I shall attempt to approach her at all, so let us dismiss the subject. Here are the books you wanted, and I hope you will make such good use of them as to make sure of your license at the close of the present term."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

—A St. Louis paper states that a young lady who has all her life gone on her way rejoicing in the delectable sirname of *Sheepshanks*, has applied to the legislature to change her name. Some wiseacre of an editor in that quarter says, "Pshaw! why don't the girl get married?"

* * *

—Silly and worthless people generally take most pains to adorn themselves, as in the animal world insects are the gayest in colors.

THE RIVALS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

You would be a great musician—
  Strumming, strumming always so,
Thinking, "Does the courting youngster
  Feel that from my fingers flow
Music, real music, mine
Only born at Beauty's shrine?"

Strumming, strumming, strumming, strumming,
  Ah, my torture, see him there
Laughing at you in the corner
  As you with affected air
Ask him, "Isn't this divine?"
Beau says, "Yes!" "Because 'tis *mine*."

"Ha! those tomcats in the court-yard!
  I must go and stop them all!"
He has gone, and there he whispers
  "Bless, O, bless the caterwall!
This is *Nature*, at the least,
Than a strummer better beast!"

Strumming, strumming, strumming, strumming!
  Maiden! will you list to me?
Will you without any hatred
  Take advice I offer thee?
"No, sir!"—Well, then, toss your head
Till the beaten Banjo 's dead.

Then we will have rest—no! no!
  Strumming fool, a thousand more
Will take idiot example,
  So the discord ne'er is o'er.
Well, still strum, strum, away!
  Away? No, ye will never go!
Still must your neighbors agonize
  In what ye call "*sweet* music's flow!"
Well, there's *some* relief from all,
In that *natural* caterwall!

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CASPER ATHWOLD'S STORY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

I am Casper Athwold. I was born in the old Athwold mansion, where I live to-day. Shall I tell you how many years ago? I think not. A man may keep that for his own secret, and be young or old, as God gives him the heart. Some are young all their lives.

They say *He* made me beautiful, but one day a tipsy nurse dropped me from her arms down the whole length of the steep oak stair-case. Shall I say any more? I had rather not; I think there is no need.

Yet I was a happy child; a hurt child always is its mother's darling, dearer than fairer children, and I was her only one—*my* mother's.

As I grew up I built such castles in the air as other youths built; oftener when my dear parent was gone from me to Heaven, and the world was very lonely. Then, in my castle, I began to see Kate Norman's figure.

Kate Norman's dark-eyed, crimson-cheeked face smiling on me from visionary firesides there, and hear her voice singing children's lullabies in the far-off future; the lullabies of my children. We met often. She was always kind and friendly. I had fancied something more.

One day, at the time I thought more of her, I went in the heat of the afternoon to a shady spot by the riverside—my own ground—though it was so pleasant for the neighbor's children that I never had had the heart to fence it in. I lay upon the grass, reading a rare old book, a poet's dream with love for its text—a book to read in such a place—when behind the glossy leaves of the plants which the little ones called "bread and butter bushes," I heard the sparrow-like twitter of young girls voices, chatting with each other.

"She'll have him," said one.

"She fancy such a bridegroom," said the other. "All his money couldn't buy me."

"He don't want *you*, but Kate Norman," said the first.

"As if I envied her! One must be at one's last prayer to want such an admirer. No one *could* like Casper Athwold."

"Of course not," said the first; "but then he's rich, and Kate poor enough."

"You are right; no woman could love him; but money will marry anybody. It will turn out as I say. Hush!"

"What?" cried the other.

"I heard steps, I'm sure," said the first; "fancy his coming upon us. These are his grounds, you know. Come, come away."

There was a rustle, a sound of feet on the grass. The chirping voices died away in the distance. I stood up and looked over the bushes, where they had been; I saw a couple of orange rinds and a paper sticky with candy.

They were boarding-school girls from the stuccoed building on the hill; the confectioner's chief patrons, silly, vapid creatures enough, but *girls* still, and in this way girls talked of *me*.

I stopped all my other thoughts to think that over. I was not vain or blind, but we are to ourselves what we know ourselves to be—that which goes on into eternity, not the clay-mould at which people look from afar off, and to which they bid adieu, as it lies in the coffin,—and I, to myself, was a man with more tenderness and passion, more power and will to love than most men, and I was never to be loved.

Just for ten minutes I hated the world; hated the jolly, broad-shouldered farmer tramping along the bridle-path, with his clear, shrill whistle; hated the red-faced boatman on the river; hated the yellow-haired child in the bottom of the boat at his feet; hated all who lived and breathed, and walked tall and straight under the sky. Then my heart softened, and I wept. I had loved Kate Norman, and I loved her still. The night before, never thinking of myself at all, I had thought of her as some time to be mine. The girls' chatter had awakened me to the truth. Just as I lived now, alone in the old homestead amongst the maples, so I must live unless I *bought* a wife with my gold—a wife who could not love me.

That ended my brief wooing time. I went no more to the cottage in the green lane. I met Kate no more, "by chance," in quiet places. I did no more of those foolish things that lovers have done since lovers were, but I loved on all the same.

I shut myself up in the old house, among my books, and shunned the sight of fair faces and the sound of sweet voices. It was the best thing that a man, whom no one could love, could do.

So the months wore away. Sometimes I had met her, but I always looked another way, and our pleasant greetings had come to an end. I had seen a hurt flush on her face, and taken no heed of it. I had been even discourteous—but I loved her just as I had loved her all along. Pride kept me from showing it. But, when I was dead, when I could no longer blush for shame of such a hopeless love, then I should not care to have the dreams I had once cherished hidden any longer. Then, when she would not laugh at me—for all are tender of the dead—I should like her to know just how I had felt to her. So, one day I went to the good old lawyer who had had charge of our estate for forty years, and bade him draw me up a will, in which I left all the wealth that I possessed to Kate Norman, with a letter which only her hands were to unseal, only her eyes to read, after I was gone.

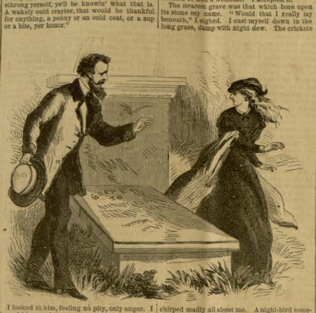
This was the letter:

> "Kate Norman, you never cared for me; you could not; once I heard a woman say no woman could; but I loved you better than my life. Had I cherished one faint ray of hope, I would have striven to win your heart as man never strove before; but I learnt, in time, what folly mine was; and, in pity for myself, held aloof from you. Had I been as other men are, you should have shared all that I possess, with me. As it is, it gives me some pleasure to think that you will dwell under this roof and tread these garden walks when I am gone; and surely, if spirits ever revisit this world, mine will return at times to look upon you, Kate Norman, in this home where my sad life has passed.
>
> "Adieu. When you read this, the hand that writes these words will have mouldered into dust—and you will pity, not deride, the love of
>
> CASPER ATHWOLD."

This note lay sealed and directed, "To be given to Kate Norman after my death;" and the will was also signed and sealed, and I walked home in the still twilight. The burthen of my life was heavy upon me that night; the heavier, as I caught a glimpse of Kate Norman at the window of her pretty cottage-home, and heard a trill of the song that she was singing as she rocked her sister's youngest child upon her knee.

At my door the elm-shadows lay thick, and in them stood a bent, crooked figure, clothed in rags, that of a beggar, who began his dolorous whine as I came up:

"A little help, yer honor, just a little; a few ould clothes, yer honor; these are dropping off me. I'm not a sthrong man, yer honor; I can't work, like the same. Yer honor isn't that sthrong yerself, ye'll be knowin' what that is. A wakely ould crayter, that would be thankful for onything, a penny or an ould coat, or a sup or a bite, yer honor."



I looked at him, feeling no pity, only anger. I tossed him a coin.

"Go," I said, "don't loiter *here*. That will buy food for you."

The man looked at me curiously, as though he had expected more pity from me. The coin had fallen at his feet. He stooped and picked it up.

"Yes, it'll buy a bite," he said. "Good luck to ye. It's not always I ate before I slape. Thank God, there's a long slape comin' some time."

I turned and looked at the beggar. He echoed my own thoughts. He was miserable also. "Come in," I said, more kindly. "I'll give you some clothes, you need them sadly."

"It's nothing but needing with me, yer honor," said the beggar. "The likes of me can't work."

"You have had an accident?" I said.

"Long ago," said the beggar. "My father threw me out o' a window for a joke when he was not sober. I just mind it, and mother screaming."

I stood looking at him, dreamily wondering if he were like me, for a while. Then I took from my wardrobe garments I had worn, and bade him put them on. Afterwards I gave him food. I called no servant in; no one saw him come or go save myself. He departed, blessing me. I watched him out of sight. Then I burst out into a laugh, a wild kind of scream.

"He had best go and offer his hand and heart to Miss Kate Norman," I said. "They would make a well-matched couple. Does he look like me in my clothes, I wonder. They fit him well." Then I remember going out of the door and down towards the water's edge. A boat lay there, with the oars in it. I think I was mad when I stepped into her. If not, I went mad as I rowed up the river. I talked to myself, I laughed, I sneered. I fancied that mermaids floated about the boat, mocking me. Some had faces like that of Kate Norman; *their* sneers were most bitter. The twilight faded, night came on; a dark, moonless night. I had dropped the oars and was drifting seaward, lying at the bottom of the boat. I knew that I was in danger, but the knowledge did not affect me. It was not so much that I sought death as that I had given up all care for life.

Suddenly a glare of red light flashed over my face. I heard a heavy, steady throb of machinery, then a shrieking whistle and a shout of voices; a steamer was hard upon my little boat.

After that I knew nothing until I came to myself in a strange room, in a strange hotel at Albany. The captain of the steamer which had run my boat down fancied that to his account lay the fever and delirium which had come upon me, and had had me taken care of. It was two weeks since the day last in my memory. I read that in the morning paper. There, also, I read this paragraph:

> "The body found in the woods at —— has been identified by the garments and some personal peculiarities, as that of Mr. Caspar Athwold, an esteemed and wealthy citizen of the place, who has been missing many days. His funeral takes place this morning."

I dropped the paper in amazement. My own name—the record of my own death. Then I burst into a bitter laugh. I understood it all. The beggar, in form so like myself, whom I had clothed in my own garments, had died upon the road. He it was—none other—who was that day to be buried under my name. At first, it seemed merely a cruel sort of joke. Then, the memory of my will and of the letter written to Kate Norman flashed upon me. I must reach home and prove myself a living man, before it was too late. Weak as I was, I arose and dressed myself; and, giving my address to the landlord, left the hotel in a carriage for the depot, but I reached it only in time to find the train gone. Another hour or so must pass. They were ages to me. She should not read that letter while I lived—she should not.

At last I was fairly off—fairly on my way to ——. In the dark of the evening I alighted at the depot and hurried homeward.

There I should find my servants, and, probably, the lawyer, who would find it his duty to secure everything for the future heiress. They would not, I hoped, read the will so soon—yet it was customary. If this had been done, how should I act? how speak? Could I face those who would know my secret at all? It seemed not. Only a little space lay between the depot and my home. The railroad encroachments had been my mother's greatest troubles in the last years of her life. Now this fact enabled me, ill as I was, to reach the house without delay. It was dark, and I met no one. No servant loitered about the garden. In a moment I knew why. They had assembled in the parlor to hear my will read—for, through the Venitian shutters long bars of light fell across the porch; and looking in, unseen myself, I saw Kate Norman with a letter in her hand, glide through the opposite door. The will had been read. Before I could interpose, she would have read the letter also.

I clasped my hands upon my brow. What should I do?—return as I had come?—change my name?—dwell where no one knew me?—and toiling for my bread, let those who thought me dead still cherish their belief? It seemed that this were better than to return to be the gaping town's-folks' nine days' wonder. Worst of all, to meet Kate Norman! I turned from the window and hurried away—but I was still very, very week, and soon my strength gave way. It was just as I reached the church-yard. The road was bare and barren, with no resting-place upon it; but within the gates the soft green grass tempted me, and the willow-branches seemed to nod a welcome. I accepted it.

The nearest grave was that which bore upon its stone my name. "Would that I really lay beneath," I sighed. I cast myself down in the long grass, damp with night dew. The crickets chirped madly all about me. A night-bird somewhere gave a wild shriek now and then, like a lost soul in pain. "What if the graves were to open now," I thought, "and those within stalk forth in their shrouds, should I be terrified?" I believed not. That agony of living love was too strong upon me for any frozen church-yard fears.

No—I could not meet her. I could never see her again. I must go somewhere where, by no chance, I could cross her pathway. I never loved her so. Would she ever come to this that seemed my grave, and, for pity's sake, plant flowers upon it? Would she ever say: "Though no woman could ever love him, yet he loved well."

These thoughts whirled through my brain, and fancies wilder than they. I felt my blood on fire; I could not stop thinking; I could not give tired nature her way, and drop asleep amid those grave-yard damps, though I was weary and worn beyond all description. I heard the church clock strike nine. It startled me to think an hour had flown when the same clock struck ten. I lifted up my head to listen, and saw a figure gliding up the church-yard path—a woman's figure, muffled in a dark shawl. It came straight on and cast itself on the grave by which I sat—the grave beneath which the beggar lay whom they had taken for myself—cast itself upon it, kissing the turf, covering it with little soft, white, woman's palms, and sobbing wildly. The shadows hid me. I gazed unseen upon the mourner. Who was it? Some one who had mistaken the spot, no doubt. She lifted up her head, then—that mourner—and the muffling-shawl fell back. In the moonlight I saw her face. It was Kate Norman. "Had pity brought her there so soon? Could pity make a woman weep so? I drew nearer; I listened; she spoke; it was my name she uttered; she coupled it with all fond words that lovers use, and then she lifted her clasped hands to heaven.

"Oh! Casper, Casper," she cried, "shall I never look into your sweet eyes again? Never hear your dear voice? Can I never tell you how I loved you? You who loved me also, whom I shall love, and no other until I die. Oh, Casper, Casper, Casper!"

* * * * * * * *

Silence, with the cricket's chirp amidst it, and the wild bird's scream—silence in which amidst the midnight of the graveyard, dawn broke upon my soul, and a new life filled my heart. Then I stood beside her, holding her close and fast.

"Do not fear me. Do not tremble so," I cried. "It is a living Casper Athwold who comes to you, and no ghost. Oh, Kate—Kate Norman, you gave tender words to the dead clay you thought mine, will you bless me with them living. Speak, Kate, look at me."

But she hid her face in my bosom, and would not look up—would only cling to me with her soft, white hands, and sob over and over again, my name—nothing else, just my name.

And there we stood alone together amidst the graves. I content to stand there, her hand in mine, her cheek upon my bosom, until the blessed evening time lengthened itself into eternity.

But at last she told me this, that of all men I was to her the best, of all men even the pleasantest to look upon; and when, knowing myself so well, I wonderingly asked her how I might dare dream that this could be, she made only the woman's answer, "Because I love you."

Could any answer give me more content? So, in the moonlight, on that happy night, we went forth from the old graveyard into the world of life, hand-in-hand, as we have gone together ever since, I and that dearest woman who has been my wife so many happy years.

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—Be more prudent for your children than, perhaps, you have been for yourself. When they, too, are parents, they will imitate you, and each of you will have prepared happy generations, who will transmit, together, with your memory, the worship of your wisdom.

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—Every young man should remember that the world will always honor industry. The vulgar and useless idler, whose energies of body and mind are rusting for want of occupation, may look with scorn—it is praise; his contempt is honor.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. E.—Do you not remember what Paul says, "It hath pleased God, that the Captain of our salvation, *through suffering*, should be made perfect?" And if the *divine Captain* could only be made perfect as to His humanity *through suffering*, how shall the mere human private hope to escape the same chastening discipline? If you will look closely into the matter, you will find that your spiritual sufferings, and in fact about *all* your sufferings, come simply from your *disobedience*. You have not made that perfect surrender of yourself to your Heavenly Father from which, and only from which, cometh perfect peace. When one of your own children assumes an attitude of disobedience, whether active or passive, towards you, does he ever know peace, or content, or anything but unhappiness, until he surrenders his will to yours, and resumes his natural, fitting position of *obedience?* You probably daily pray "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven;" but does it occur to you that it is only in the individual surrender of every *individual* will—your own among the rest—to God, that *His* will can ever *be* "done on earth?" Your discontent, and unsatisfiedness, and unhappiness, would all disappear, should you succeed in bringing your own heart into perfect subjection to its rightful Ruler. But *that* is the work of a lifetime.

MARRIED LOVERS.—Over this signature, a man who calls himself "honest and well meaning, but unfortunate," writes as follows: "I am," he says, "a married man, and have fallen deeply in love with a lady who is also married. We love each other very dearly. Now, is there any harm in our so loving one another. We have striven to overcome this unfortunate affliction, but find it impossible. Neither of us intends to allow it to influence our conduct in any way, but to keep it locked in the recesses of our own hearts. Under these circumstances, is there any harm in it?" Yes, there is great harm in it, and you should both exterminate the accursed passion as soon as possible, else it will keep you constantly miserable, and probably at last cover you both with everlasting disgrace. The only case in which a married man has a right to fall in love with a married woman, is when the married woman with whom he falls in love is his own wife.

TROUBADOUR.—You ought not to have been caught out so late, in the "moonlit grove," and all that, by the old gentleman. It is always dangerous wandering by moonlight, in "fairy groves," with the "loveliest being on earth." Midnight is an especially dangerous hour for such pedestrianism.

"'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell:
 The wood-tick has kept the minutes well;
 He has counted them all with click and stroke
 Deep in the heart of the mountain oak,
 And he has awakened the sentry elve
  Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
 To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
  And call the fays to their revelry."

And so, the first thing you know, there you are in the midst of incomprehensible spells; and there's no telling what fatal promises you may make under the influence of such midnight and moonlight witchery.

CONSTANCE.—We have repeatedly stated that ladies should be careful about corresponding with gentlemen "in a friendly way," or "as a mere matter of friendship," &c., &c. A lady who carries on such a correspondence is almost certain, at some time, to regret it. Estrangements come up; she forms new ties; she begins to regret that any man, save her husband, has her letters in his possession; or if the person so having her letters become a vagabond, or an adventurer, as sometimes happens, he may have it in his power to annoy her in many ways. For many reasons, it is better that a lady should not make a practice of corresponding with gentlemen.

DOMUS.—It is never a good plan for a young man to get in the habit of associating with persons addicted to vulgar conversation, or who are given to smoking, chewing, loafing, lounging, idleness, prodigality, or other evil tendencies or practices. The circle of genteel vagabonds into which you seem to have got will be pretty sure to occasion your ruin, unless you abandon it. The fact that the members of the circle are all much wealthier than you are, is of itself a sufficient reason for your quitting their companionship. It will ruin you to keep even with them in expenditures.

AMELIA.—You young ladies should ascertain the *facts* in regard to any given case, before allowing yourselves to get into a dispute about it. If you had taken the trouble to look at the history of Esau as given in the Bible you would have learned that he had *three* wives, and discovered that you were all right as to the *names*, some of you having the name of one of his wives, and others of you the names of his other wives. Aholibamah was his second wife, and *she* was the daughter of Anah, a descendant of Seir the Horite. (See Genesis, XXXVI, 2—25.)

JACOBUS.—If you have a good home and a chance to succeed your father on a valuable farm, you could do better to stay at home, and stick to farming, than to come to New York and take your chance as a musician in an orchestra. The probability is that your musical genius, which is considered so extraordinary in your remote neighborhood, would not attract the slightest notice in this metropolis, and that your talent would not keep you from starving in a city which has buried many a smarter youth than you are, at the public expense.

CHURCH.—What is the poor woman to do, of whom you complain for bringing her babe to church? She has nobody to leave it with, and she must either bring it with her, or stay away herself. Your church-going evidently does you so little good, that perhaps it would be a good plan for you to volunteer to go to the poor woman's house on the Sabbath and take care of the baby for her, while she attends church. That would be a downright, practical piece of Christianity, such as you could not very well fail to be benefitted by.

FARMER.—If you can prove that the party referred to owns the dog that killed your sheep, you can make him pay you for them. In the first place, however, you should have clear proof that the sheep were killed by anybody's dog. So long as the *manner* of their death is left open to conjecture, it would be indiscreet for you to sue any one for their value, on the ground that he owns the dog that killed them. The mere facts that your sheep were killed, and that a certain man owns a dog, will not ensure your case.

D. W.—It would be a good plan for you to go to Europe, on a health-seeking tour, if you can afford it, and have a mind of your own, and really mean what you say. But the danger is, that you would be drawn hither and thither by curiosity, and would so exhaust yourself as to injure, rather than benefit your health. It is pitiable to see men sneak off to Europe, under a plea of benefitting their health, when in fact their real object is to gratify their curiosity in regard to matters in which they are afraid to indulge at home.

O. F.—As a general rule, good-temper is a trait of character to be not only cultivated, but used in practical life. It may seem to you that your enemy sets too much stress on your ill-natured remark to him; but you must remember that an ill-natured remark always impresses the person to whom it is addressed more than it does the person who makes it. As the case stands, you have nothing to do except to bring about a better understanding by an explanation, or else to let things take their course.

D. C. H.—Your attempt at the description of Satan's passage through the "vasty void," as you call it, is feeble and absurd. Milton's few lines,

"So eagerly the fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies,"

utterly dwarf your entire ten pages.

ÆTNA.—The word "personification" has by no means gone out of use, and the person who maintains that it has, is mistaken. It means the act of personifying. In rhetoric, it is a reference to some inanimate object or thing as a living being, as,

"*Chaos* umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
Whereby he reigns."

REAL ESTATE.—You must look after your property in the vicinity of One Hundred and Fifty-fifth street, if you want to protect yourself against excessive assessments. If you neglect it, and allow incumbrances to accumulate upon it from year to year, it is your own fault; and you cannot reasonably expect strangers to exert themselves to protect interests which *you* did not think worth looking after.

SPRINGFIELD.—The time which a student requires to fit himself for the practice of medicine depends upon his capacities and gifts. Some easily "fit themselves" for such a practice in three years, and others never become fit for it, as bereaved families and populous churchyards could testify.

DOUBLE.—A public officer should look first to the interests of the public, and administer his office for the public good. If, in so doing, he can serve a friend, he *ought* to serve him; but he should never allow personal and private considerations to interfere with the discharge of his official duties.

M. N.—It is claimed, and generally admitted, that London is now the most populous and wealthy city on the globe.

MISSOURIAN says that the girls of his section are so fond of store clothes, he believes they'd sell their souls for a calico dress. This is rather savage; but Missourian supports his assertion by the following state of facts. He says: "I was engaged to be married to a girl nineteen years old, and I am twenty-seven. I own a small farm, and do a little trapping in the winter. On the whole, I'm considered a flourishing young man, and I am. But I've not much ready money, and I'm trying to save up what I can. So I didn't give the girl many presents. Well, by and by a fellow comes along with hair on his upper lip, and dressed like a baboon in a circus, and flourishing a gold watch, and he goes to making love to my girl. I said nothing, but let things run. He gave her lots of presents, and a gold watch and gold breast-pin besides. And he won her, and married her. But in about a month he had to cut his stick, for another wife came after him. Here was a pretty kettle of fish. Well, his second wife, *my girl*, got a divorce, and now she's kind a looking sweet on me again, and I hear that she expects me to marry her. What do you think of such a turn? She's a good girl, and she's got the run-away chap's presents, gold breast-pin and gold watch and all. On the whole, it looks like a good spec. What do you think of it?" We think you have a deal of human nature in you, and that all things considered—gold breast-pin and gold watch included—you would not lose anything, which you would value, by marrying the "girl."

WHAT SHALL I DO?—Over this signature, a girl writes to us as follows: "I am deeply puzzled, and don't know what to do, and have no one to advise me. I am young and inexperienced. I have a lover who is also quite young—my parents think too young to think of marrying. So they have forbade us thinking of such a thing for two years. At this my lover became enraged, and declares he will not wait that long. He says, *now or never*. What shall I do? Please tell me right off, for this is dreadful." You should listen to the counsel of your parents, of whose affection, and devotion, and wisdom you can have no doubt, if you possess ordinary common sense; and let your selfish young lover go. The idea that he should impudently attempt to dictate in such a matter, and proclaim that it must be, "now or never," shows that he is a selfish young jackanapes, who has not yet had a proper "call" to be a husband.

CONGRESS puts the following question: "I have been working," he says, "for two years, for a certain gentleman, but he has sold out to another man, and I am now working for the new boss, who comes to the factory every few days, where I have to see him. Now, I want to be perfectly respectful to him, and do just the right thing; and so would like to know whether, when he comes in, I should salute him first, or wait for him to salute me? If I salute him first, I'm afraid he may think me forward and presuming; and if I wait for him to salute me first, he may think I'm sulky and unmannerly. What should I do?" If your new boss is a thorough-bred, and understands such matters, he will save you all trouble, by always saluting you first. But if he is not "posted," you should act according to circumstances, and do what seems to put him most at his ease for the time being.

MATE.—The expression "an one" is in no way incorrect, except as to euphony. It should be "a one;" as, the letter *o*, in the word *one*, has the same consonantal sound which *w* has in the word *won;* and, euphonically speaking, the article *an* should not be used before a word beginning with a *consonant sound*. It is *grammatically* correct to say "a one," or "an one," as many prefer. For example: suppose your disputatious friend, holding up her parasol, should say, "Did you ever see such a parasol before?" It would be grammatically correct for you to say, in reply, "O, yes; I've often seen such *a one*."

ENQUIRER.—You could not hit upon any means for aiding your husband, which would be less likely to succeed, than that of public reading. In all the years since that mode of entertainment was first introduced, not half-a-dozen persons have been able to pay their expenses as public readers. You cannot place the least reliance on what your friends tell you about your talents. In the first place, they probably are not good judges; and in the second place, it is not likely they would wish to hurt your feelings by adverse criticism. You should at once abandon the idea of making money as a public reader.

TEAM.—It is a question of fact whether or not you told your neighbor that he could have your horse and buggy, on the day named. You either did tell him so, or you did not; and, furthermore, you probably know just what you promised or refused to promise. But, even if you did agree to let your neighbor have your turn-out, he had no right to go to your stable and take it, without your knowledge. On that point he was clearly and flagrantly wrong. Such conduct as that is not to be tolerated; and you should confine your contest to that point. You can win on that every time.

BIRMAH.—Your "call" to go as a missionary to Birmah, may be as mandatory as you suppose; but the chances are that no "call" from Heaven would come in such a way as to set a daughter at variance with parents whom she herself considers "the most devout and consistent Christians that she ever knew." You are rather young for such an enterprise, and it could certainly do no harm for you to wait a few years, and see if your own impulsions and the wishes of your Christian parents cannot be harmonized.

W. L.—A preacher must go according to law, as well as other people. It is no doubt a good thing for a competent man to preach to a crowd of vagabonds, in the street on Sunday; but the preacher should not leave his permit, so to preach, at home. On the occasion referred to, the policeman did right in calling for an exhibition of your permit to preach in the public streets, and he also did right in not taking your word that you had one but had left it at home.

MUSIC DEALER.—Why do you lend money to the vagabond professors of music referred to? You should stop that practice at once. This city is infested with such adventurers, who will ruin you, if you will let them. Their "influence" is of no use to you, and can be of no use to you. In fact, they have no influence, except with greenhorns like yourself, and what influence they have, they use for their own selfish purposes. You should cut loose from them at once.

H. D.—If your lawyer, after a full statement of the case to him, advises you that you have no cause of action against your neighbor, you should accept his advice and be thankful for his frankness in the matter. If you disregard what he tells you, and go to some other lawyer, and get him to bring a suit, the chances are that you will be badly beaten and have a heavy bill of costs to pay.

L. H. B.—The article called *sienna*—an earthy pigment, of a brownish color—takes its name from Sienna, in Italy, whence it originally came, and from whence the pure sienna still comes. A pigment is a paint, or a preparation used by painters to impart colors to bodies; and a "natural pigment" is a substance which requires but little preparation for use.

HUNGARIAN.—As you are a subject of Austria, the treaty recently entered into between the United States and Prussia in regard to citizenship, etc., would not cover your case. Whether we shall soon have a similar treaty with Austria, we cannot say. You should be cautious about returning to your native land, so long as matters remain unsettled.

DEBATER.—In debate, the *affirmative* has the right to close the argument—that is, to make the last speech. The president of the society decides all questions of order, in the first instance; but if any one should think the decision wrong, he would have a right to appeal from it, and then the society itself would decide it by vote.

QUERIST.—It is perfectly proper for a couple to get married at the minister's house, if for any reason it is more convenient for them to do so, and he is willing. No ring is *necessary*, in performing the ceremony, but a bride always feels better to have one, not only on the occasion of the wedding, but ever after.

NEWBURGH.—You can easily find an opportunity to enlist as a seaman in the United States Navy, if you can pass muster as an able-bodied man. Inquire at the Navy Yard, in Brooklyn, and you can learn where to make application for enlistment.

O. S.—You should go to your sick boy's room when you go home at night, and show some affection for him, and exhibit an interest in his welfare. Such things go a great way even with grown people, and to children they are unspeakably precious.

LADY LOVER.—So long as you are in doubt as to which of the two young men you love the best, you may be certain that you do not love either of them enough to marry him. When you once really *love*, you will have no doubts on the subject.

J. H. R. (Cincinnati).—*Dexter* trotted a mile, at Buffalo, in 2:17¼. The Cincinnati paper to which you refer made a mistake in printing his time as 2:17¾.

D. H.—The only safe way is for you never to send your money to strangers who are solicitous to make your fortune for you at a slight expense.

⁎ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*